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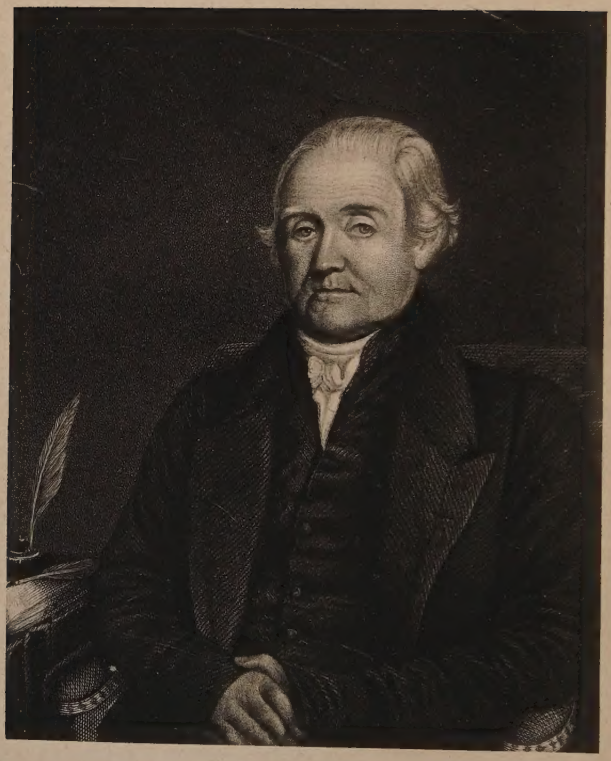
NOTES ON THE LIFE OF NOAH WEBSTER



NOAH WEBSTER.

NOAH WEBSTER

NOTES ON THE LIFE OF NOAH WEBSTER

COMPILED BY
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EDITED BY
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VOLUME II

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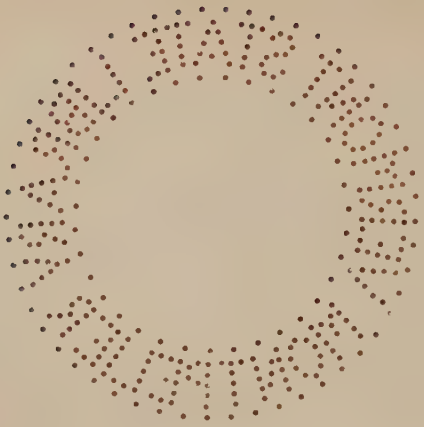

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CHAPTER XI

PUBLICATION OF HIS FIRST DICTIONARY

In 1806 Webster published, as a result of those philological studies which he had already prosecuted for twenty years, *A Compendious Dictionary of the English Language.*

As early as 1800 he had commenced the preparation of a dictionary for schools, but this was laid aside and superseded by the fuller work, which he published in a small octavo volume. He considered this book a mere preliminary to a larger one, yet it contained a considerable number of words not to be found in any similar work, with the definitions corrected throughout, though necessarily expressed in very brief terms. Besides being a manual of language, it was intended as a sort of humble encyclopedia for every day use, and doubtless was of great help at that time, when books and papers were few and difficult to obtain.

He had been educating himself in the knowledge of words for many years, and during the closing years of the last, and the early ones of the present, century,[1] his face was set toward

[1] Written between 1885 and 1892.—[Ed.]

the study and improvement of language. This modest dictionary was an earnest of his stupendous later labors.[1]

Webster at this time had not gone farther back than the Hebrew. Later he included Arabic in his researches, but alas! Sanscrit remained a sealed book to him to the end of his life.[2] [3]

[1] See Appendices XXIV. and XXV. below.

[2] 'A comparative philologist without a knowledge of Sanscrit is like an astronomer without a knowledge of mathematics. He may admire, he may observe, he may discover, but he will never feel satisfied, he will never feel certain, he will never feel quite at home.' *Chips from a German Workshop*, Max Müller, iv. p. 19. But this dictum of Müller is not beyond criticism.

[3] About 1805 Webster published 'Elements of Useful Knowledge' in two volumes, 'containing a historical and geographical account of the United States.' Afterward a third volume giving a 'historical and geographical account of Europe, Asia and Africa with a brief description of New Holland and the principal Islands in the Pacific and Indian Ocean.' A fourth volume was 'A History of Animals.'

In thanking him for, and commending these books, Dr David Ramsay writes,

Charleston, January 31st, 1806,[1]

***'It is much to be regretted that there is so little intercourse in the literary way between the States. As soon as a book of general utility comes out in any State it should be for sale in all of them. The British reviewers boast that their support will ensure the currency of any book from the Thames to the Ganges. I hoped much from the literary fair. This if properly managed would be of great service both to authors and printers. Readers are increasing in these states, and I trust the day is not far distant when the sale of two thousand copies of an original work might be counted upon. This would make it worth while to write books. All that I have ever done in that way, has not cleared actual expenses. Many booksellers never accounted at all for the books put into their hands for sale.'

[1] This letter has not been found for collation.—[Ed.]

From Rufus King. W. MSS.

Jamaica Long Island
May 13, 1806

Dear Sir

It is several days since I have rec[d] your interesting letter of [left blank] but having been personally engaged in arranging my Books & furniture, which I am removing from the House where I have resided, and dividing between this Place and town, I have really had no leisure to send you an earlier acknowledgment.

It may be desireable that your State should look into, and express its Sentiments concerning the condition and tendency of our national affairs, and it might be still more advantageous that this sh[d] be done by Massachusetts, which is deeply interest[ed] in all that affects the Navigation and Trade of the Country.

Should anything be attempted it ought to be on higher Evidence than mere news paper accounts, and perhaps it would in this case be expedient that you sh[d] call upon your Senators to come before you, for the purpose of disclosing an authentic view of the late national Proceedings.

I write in much haste, and can only add that I should think nothing sh[d] be done, unless the Gov[r] M[r]. Ellsworth and other important characters approve.

With sentiments of sincere Respect
I remain D[r]. Sir
Yr ob Ser.

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

New haven Sunday morn[g] [May 1806]

I have risen before any of my family to write a line to my dear husband. M[r] Rossiter brought me your letter last even[g]. I am happy to hear from you & that you are agreably situated in M[r] Goodwins family. Democracy has increased sadly in the state. I fear D[r] Dwight was right in

dispairing as he did the other evening that he pass'd with you. We are all well, & the exhibitions over. I think the young Ladies perform'd extremely well, the Stage was beautifully ornamented & the room both nights, as full as it could possible be. Mr Bloomfield took all that came at 1s 6d a piece, and he must have made money, but this was contrary to his agre[e]ment with Miss Hall. I attended the first night & sent Betsy & Polly the second. Mary staid with me, for I thought the fatigue woud be too much for her—it was half after twelve when I got home on Thursday night.

We had a shower on Thursday night, & again on Friday but it has cleard up astonishingly cold. I had a fire in the parlor yesterday, and was fearful of a frost last night. Julia planted the raddishes yesterday, I will place a Centinel over the important Parsnip. Josey has cut up the wood but it lies in the yard, as you said nothing about having it put into the wood house.

I calld on Mrs Whittlesey, & the old Lady was very polite. She says as far as she has any right to the Pew, we are welcome to sit in it, but the Pew was spared as a Ministers Pew, & Mrs Stewart will sit there in future. Mr A Bradley['s] family are without seats & there is like to be a good deal of ill blood in the society.

Dorman has brought 4 letters for you one charming one from Emily I shall keep till you come *for a treat*, one from Mr Buckminster of Boston with a copy of a Periodical work call'd the Polyanthos (this I have not receiv'd) requesting you or some of your friends to furnish him with a short sketch of the life, & criticisms on the writings of *certain* great men in Connecticut. the other[s] are on business & relate to each other, I shall send them enclosed in this to the care of Mr Ingersol as one of them seems to demand an answer. the Children are up & calling Mama. Adieu my dear husband, I shall expect you home next Satterday.

Yours affectionately,

Miss Polly Mix is dead, & Miss Betsy very low.

From THOMAS DAWES, Jun. W. MSS.

Boston June 18th. 1806

DEAR BROTHER.

I have just taken from the Post Office yours of the 14th. I will speak of Bell presently. Brother Pope brought Mama Greenleaf to us some days ago, I think a Fortnight To-morrow and took with him to Bedford your good little Emily; whom, I assure you, we all very much love. I consider her as one added to the tribe of my young friends. Mama G. is now at my House 'withered weak and grey' in the language of Milton. I am *now* quite glad at her coming: tho' at first I doubted, in my own mind, of her discretion in risquing her fragile person on so long a journey. Sister Bell has been under our roof a week or so until yesterday.

* * * You have seen, ere this, how the Jacobins have lost their day in the General Court, the barefacedness of the measures of 21 senators and the manly protest of the 19, with the tender consciences of a few of the demo's in the other house spread such an alarm that the majority absolutely gave way. They could not be drummed up to the charge, notwithstanding they had been drilled every night for a full fortnight in a pandemonium caucus. Seeing all this, the Leaders, of a sudden, pretended to find out one or two returns that could not be counted in their favor; and so, making a merit of necessity, confessed that the dear people had really elected Governor Strong and they would not oppose the divine will of the people so clearly revealed. Caleb was then brot' in with a shout, and the Bells of old Boston merrily rang. In every other article the Demos have had their way and turned old honesty out of doors wherever they could find him. Our best Judges think that good will come out of all this. I have not seen the review of your Dictionary in the Panoplist but I trust it is a friendly one because Dr. Morse wrote it which I suppose you know. But if you dont know it dont say I told you.

Ever yours,

Love to sister Beckey.

From JOSIAH QUINCY. W. MSS.

Boston. 30. June. 1806.

DEAR SIR,

I should have, with pleasure attended to your request, in relation to your dictionary, but untill this day I have not been able to procure a copy. Your preface, I have perused with great satisfaction, and could wish that you had pushed your remarks and enquiries on the analogies and etymology of the language farther. Many of your observations are both new and just and interesting. This is a subject for which I have no inconsiderable taste but other pursuits have not left me, at leisure, to cultivate it.

I believe there is a disposition in the men of literary inclinations in this neighbourhood to treat this work with more indulgence than they have been usually inclined to extend to attempts of a kin to this, which have been made, in this country. I have, however, some little doubt of inviting newspaper notice of it until it has gotten into more hands, which it will in a short period I think, gradually. Some man of sarcastic temperature may thereby be stimulated to exercise himself upon it and thus give it a temporary unpopularity. The natural and slow progress of just reputation will, in a little time deter adventurers in this way, and secure the quickest and surest harvest both of reputation & pecuniary profit.

I intend to write you more particularly on this subject hereafter.

Very respectfully,

I am your hble Servt

From THOMAS DAWES, Jun. W. MSS.

Boston 10th. August 1806.

DEAR BROTHER.

We have recieved your summons for the return of Emily; which is the only uncomfortable circumstance about her visit; and yet every visit must have its end; and when-

ever a friend comes, we know he must depart. However sensible I am of this very simple position, I never can part with one to whom I have acquired some attachment, without inquietude. And I have not a little of this emotion at parting with Emmy, who is indeed a very good girl, a very interesting little creature, and for whom we all have as much affection as you and her mother could wish. I hope it will not be a great while before she renews her visit; and as to any of my children making any return for the one she has made, it shall be as soon as we can find it convenient, which will be as soon as our last baby (I mean Horace) is out of *arms*. For, however true certain wicked stories about *Beckey* may be, yet as to *Peggy*, Horace is the pinbasket. I shall present M^r^. Adams with a copy of your valuable Dictionary and doubt not that his verdict will be a favorable one. I find you was right about the time of meeting of our Academy:—I found by the public papers that for that day, the 13^th^. Aug^t^., I had long since advertized a meeting of the Creditors of a bankrupt one of whose commissioners I am; and fear^g^. that I should not be able to go to Cambridge that day, I gave your Essay to M^r^. J. Q. Adams to present in my name. But I now expect I shall be able so to dispose of that bankrupt business as to be able to attend the Academy. I note what you say of the Fish. Cap. Jones always procures my father's fish, and is now on the watch for him; his last Quintail being nearly out; but says it will be a month before he can procure the true Isle of Shoal-Fish and then he will get a Quintail for you and we will get it round to Newhaven, but my father says that unless you know how to watch it and shift it and turn it up and expose it from time to time to dry air, and, after all, that, unless you or your *Boston* wife know how to soak it from Friday to Saturday and then to boil it properly, and, after all that, to mince it up in your plate, *Boston* fashion, Isle of Shoal aint a bit better than a carpenter's chip after it is buttered.

I was in hopes you would have come yourself about Commencement time for Emily. As you are not to be here, I expect to take my wife, who is a little too lean, to Bedford, about that time.

Ever yours

From THOMAS DAWES, JUN. W. MSS.

Boston 14th August 1806

DEAR BROTHER:

It is late at night, and your Emmy has gone to bed, having bid me farewell for *this* visit, not the last I trust and sincerely hope. I received your last favor at noon this day and immediately procured 2 copies of your Dictionary and sent them by stage, with the Newspapers, to Cambridge. This afternoon President Webber called at my Office and acknowledged the favor and said that the office of professor of *M* being yet vacant, he was obliged to do its duties as well as those of president, & had no leisure *yet*, but hoped to have some, soon; and then would attend to your subject.

Your Phaeton I presented yesterday.

Wishing a safe return for your lovely daughter. I am, yours,

Peggy's love to Becky.

It did not occur [to me] yesterday that I should meet J. Q. Adams at Cambridge or I should have taken the Dictionary with me. But Tomorrow I shall send it by my Hannah who is going to Uncle Daniel's. I shall also send the Newspaper. Apropos I hastily read it: The piece against you is the work of no ordinary writer; but I think your answer is excellent, and that there is in it more point and good sense and what Sir Wm Temple calls *Race*, than in anything of N. W.'s that I have *red*. My own impressions, say *prejudices*, however, are in favor of a *middle path* between yourselves and the *players*. Chooseday for Tuesday

I cannot bear, and as to *keind*, it sits worse on my stomach than Indian Root. But I aint yet quite ripe for your *Orthography*. Still, I dare not make up my judgment in a matter which has never been my study, against a learned, laborious, ingenious, experienced investigator. I have not lived 49 years without acquiring some candor and modesty. So, good night.

P. S. You accuse the critic of malignity. I am not certain that your accusation is just.

From JOHN QUINCY ADAMS. Misc. letters, N.Y.P.L.

Quincy 5. November 1806.

SIR,

I received some time since through the hands of Judge Dawes your favour of 12th. Augt. together with a copy of your Dictionary and a newspaper containing the strictures of a critic at Albany and your reply to them. My thanks for your obliging present ought ere this to have been returned to you; and would have been but for a pressure of occupation at this time, and from a desire with full deliberation to give you my candid opinion respecting your project for a larger Dictionary.

There are three objections made against your plan, by the critic of Albany—relating, first to your peculiarities of spelling—secondly to your principles of pronunciation—and thirdly to the introduction into your Dictionary of local vulgarisms.

With regard to the two first, I have always considered them as under the absolute dominion of *fashion*, and as we are in the habit of receiving all our fashions from England this has been regularly imported with the rest. I have never thought it a subject worth contending about. It is true we *can* manufacture words as we can manufacture broadcloths for ourselves, and we can insist upon spelling or

pronouncing them as they *ought* to be, or as our Great-Grandfather's spelt or pronounced them, as we can dress in the costume of the seventeenth Century, or cut our cloaths on a philosophical principle of convenience, if we please. Every individual must in this respect act for himself. A patriotic spirit will from a sense of duty encourage domestic manufactures, but to prescribe their use by Law, and to prohibit the introduction of them from Great Britain, is at least of more questionable policy, and perhaps not quite so practicable.

Alterations of spelling or of pronunciation upon the *authority* of a single writer have an inevitable tendency to introduce confusion into a language. Voltaire undertook to introduce a new system of spelling into the French language. Yet his authority has not even to this day generally prevailed, and the greater part of the French Nation spell as their fathers did. Many writers however have followed his example, and a numerous class of words are consequently spelt in two different ways. I am apprehensive that your example and authority may produce a similar inconvenience to the writers and speakers of English. That is; if you adhere to the intention of getting up a standard of spelling or pronunciation different from that which is admitted in England.

The sentiments indeed which you express to me in your letter of the inconveniences, and impracticability of attempting to impose dogmas upon others in respect to pronunciation are so perfectly congenial to my own, that I could not but regret to find that our inference from these principles was not exactly the same. My own Conclusion is, to take the standard as I find it and shun all controversy on the subject. Your's I observe is to take *nearly* the standard of Entick, and to reject all subsequent changes as *innovations* of the English Stage and Court. That *innovation*, in many of the cases where you differ from them, is chargeable upon them, and not upon you, I readily believe;

but the question seems to be not who was the innovator, but whether a different, and a hostile standard shall be resorted to. Now if I deemed a new Standard necessary, I know not where I could find one which I should prefer, to your's. But I am not entirely convinced that any new one is desirable.

Your remark that the English Lexicographers are not agreed among themselves, is undoubtedly a strong argument to dissuade us from absolute and unqualified submission to any *one* of them. Nor is the authority of any one of them considered as irrefragible. Each of them has his influence, and his peculiarities are adopted or rejected according to the weight of his reasons, or the fluctuations of public taste. Standing on the same ground with them as a philologist, your opinions will doubtless have their deserved weight, but I do not think it your wish nor should I deem it proper to engage national prejudices or passions in the Cause. I would neither adopt nor reject a mode of spelling or of pronunciation, either from deference or from resistance to the English Court or Stage. I would not agree with them to prove my condescension, nor differ from them to mark my Independence. With respect to the Introduction into your Dictionary of new words, your reasoning both in the preface, and in your reply to the critic at Albany, is forcible, and to a certain degree conclusive. Where we have invented new words or adopted new senses to old words, it appears but reasonable that our dictionaries should contain them. Yet there are always a multitude of words current within particular neighborhoods or during short periods of time, which ought never to be admitted into the legitimate vocabulary of a language. A very large proportion of the words of American origin are of this description, and I confess that I should prefer to see them systematically excluded, rather than hunted up for admission into a Dictionary of classical English. In your undertaking to compile a large Dictionary to supercede those which come

to us from England, it must doubtless be necessary to proceed upon some general principle, yet I presume you will not think it necessary to insert a great number of words, which are in very common use. Between vulgarism and propriety of speech some line must be drawn, and where that shall precisely be may perhaps be a question of some difficulty. Your liberality of admission in the compendious Dictionary extends so far, that I should prefer to find in the larger work a restriction rather than an enlargement of it.

I have not had an opportunity of exchanging sentiments with President Webber, or Professor Ware, with respect to your undertaking, and know not how far they would deem it advisable to pledge our University to support your system of spelling, pronunciation, or of departure from the *English* Language. Though not entirely coinciding with you in opinion upon these subjects, I hope you will be persuaded of the sincerity with which I appretiate your genius and learning, and of my respect for the depth and extent of your researches upon this and other subjects of high moment to our Country. I have thought a free and explicit avowal of my own impressions, would be most satisfactory to you in answer to the confidence with which you had favored me, although the principles which I have accustomed myself to apply, in these cases, have led me to deductions, differing in some respect from your's.

I am, Sir, with great respect, your very humble & obed^{t}. Serv^{t}.

To Albert Gallatin.[1] W. MSS.

New Haven Dec. 24, 1806.

* * * It gives me pleasure to learn that our increasing revenues will speedily yield a surplus, beyond the ordinary demands of government. Tho I am a stranger to you &

[1] Then Secretary of the Treasury. Albert Gallatin, the most famous of an old and noble lineage, born in Geneva, 1761. Orphaned at nine years of age, he was carefully educated by

have no pretensions to much knowledge of financial concerns, yet I hope you will pardon me for offering a few thoughts on the disposal of some part of this surplus.

The President has mentioned in his message, some important objects to which this money may be applied. The constructing of good & permanent roads was the policy of the Romans for Military purposes. I hope we may pursue the same plan for Commercial & social purposes beginning with the great mail road in the most populous & commercial part of the United States, between N York & the Seat of Government, & extending it north & south till finished, then proceeding to other public roads & everywhere building bridges that shall defy all ordinary accidents. * * *

I am, Sir, very respectfully

Your Obed[t] Serv[t]

his relatives, and graduated from the Geneva Academy, 1779. Rather than enter the army of the Landgrave of Hesse, he ran away [1780], and came to America, leaving 'a competent fortune, good prospects, social position, and a strong family connexion.' [See *Encyclopædia Britannica.*] After one or two ventures in business and land speculations he threw himself into politics, and became one of the founders of the Anti-Federalist party. In 1793 he was chosen United States Senator from Pennsylvania, but the Federalists succeeded in annulling his election. Elected to Congress, 1795. Appointed by Jefferson, Secretary of the Treasury (1801), he for twelve years filled the office most ably. Always a strong advocate of peace, during the war of 1812 he accepted the proffered mediation of Russia and sailed for Europe, 1813. After many obstacles and disappointments he, with Henry Clay and John Quincy Adams, negotiated a treaty of peace. United States Minister to France, 1816, resigning in 1823, and returning to America, he consented to be the candidate for the Vice-Presidency on William H. Crawford's ticket, but withdrew before the election. Appointed Minister to England by John Quincy Adams (1826) to conduct another negotiation with that power. In 1828 he bade farewell to public life, and devoted himself to business and to science and literature, in all of which he displayed great talent. Amongst his many services, should be named his book upon Indian languages, as well as his early and constant advocacy of anti-slavery. He died in 1848.

To the Same. W. MSS.

Decr 24. 1806

SIR.

Accompanying this is a Copy of my Dictionary, which I request you to accept. You will observe that I have corrected the orthography of a few words, among which is *Controller* the title of an Officer belonging to the Treasury. The common orthography was introduced or made current by Dr Johnson, by a most egregious mistake. Baily has the word correct, & you will see the Compilers of the Encyclopedia Britannica have preserved the genuine spelling. I wish the Gentlemen at the head of Govt would set us an example of correctness in this particular, for I am one of those who feel disposed to differ from the English when obviously wrong; nor do I deem these small things wholly unimportant. * * *

I am Sir, very respectfully
Your Obedt Servt

From WILLIAM CRANCH. W. MSS.

Washn. March 3d. 1807.

DEAR SIR,

I recd. your kind letter of the 8th. Decr. but have been so constantly engaged in attending Court ever since, that I have not been able to reply.

We too, on the 2d. ulto, were blessed with another boy, whom we have called John; and who, with his mother, is in fine health.

I have no news of importance, but what I suppose you will get sooner by the public papers than by this letter.

The monstrous rebellion which has so much excited the attention of the nation, & which has been so much exaggerated by remours *issuing from this City*, has dwindled into insignificance.

The public opinion now points at Wilkinson, as equally involved in the guilt of Burr's *intentions*, and as the grossest

violator of the law & the Constitution of his Country, ever exhibited to public view, since the revolution. If he honestly imagined such violence necessary he must be extremely weak in Judgment, or deranged in his intellect.

Is their no other way of accounting for his conduct? On the *29th. of Sept*r. he wrote to Genl. Adair, urging him to join in the expedition against the Mexican provinces. In the *beginning of October*, he recd. Burr's letter in cipher, in which Burr says 'Wilkinson shall be *second* to Burr only.' Did W. expect to be *first*? Was he dissappointed at being placed in a secondary rank? And did he then take his resolution to betray his friend? Did he hope, by an excess of Zeal to cover his own Guilt from investigation?

These are enquiries which force themselves into the mind, and which are not easily answered.

There is much yet to be discover'd respecting that mysterious affair; and every day brings some new developement. The number of persons with Burr, when he deliver'd himself up to the civil authority, has dwindled to 40, and we are not yet inform'd of the contents of the boats; but if any quantity of military stores had been found, we should undoubtedly have been informed by a message to Congress.

Mr. Jefferson in his anonymous letter of 15th Jany. to his friend in Richmond, (published in the Richmond Enquirer,) after *predicting* the arrest of Burr's accomplices by Wilkinson and their deportation to the U. S., says 'I have no time to make observations, or I should take pleasure in expatiating upon the value of this *glorious* example of rebellion, suppressed without expence of blood *or treasure*, in strengthening the *affection and confidence of the friends* of—*our republican system*—and in lessening the distrust of others.' Do we not see the *source* of all the exaggerations, and of most of the rumours which have been sent *from* this City into the western Country, and which have rolled back to us with all the accumulation which they

could gather from the friends of the administration in their Course? I hope I am not uncharitable, but it seems to me that Executive credulity has either been imposed upon, or it has been blinded by its wishes.

I beg pardon for thus troubling you with my reveries. Brother Robert Greenleaf is here, and has been appointed by Col°. Wharton paymaster to the Marine Corps, which adds something to his pay. He expects his family in the Spring. Eliot & his wife are well—no certainty of an increase of family yet.

Nancy sends her Love to her Sister, yourself [and the] Children, in which she is joined by your [torn]

affectionate brother

From WILLIAM SAMUEL JOHNSON. W. MSS.

Stratford April 25. 1807

SIR.

I am disabled by a paralytick affection in my hand from answering particularly yours of the 20th. inst. respecting the pronunciation of the words you refer to. At the time I went to England in 1766 we pronounced in this Country the word you mention as if it was spelt *nater*: When I arrived in England I found it was universally pronounced nat*u*re with the full sound of the *u*, & I heard nothing of the *ch* pronunciation until the latter part of my residence in that Country, when I first heard it at the Theatre, at the time when Powell Holland &c were the principal Actors after Mr Garrick had almost retired:—and I perceived that it was adopted by some of the younger Barristers & Members of Parliament but had not become common. Mr Sheridan who had been the Preceptor of Mr Wedderburn and many other eminent Speakers at that time began to be considered in a great degree the standard of pronunciation. How he has determined it, you will see by his Dictionary & am

Sir, your obedt Servt

From Oliver Ellsworth. W. MSS.

Hartford May 19. 1807.

Dear Sir,

In answer to your letter of the 11th, I can only say that the standard sound of *u* in England or [as?] practiced in the Universities & by the best-informed in London & Bath, is *yu*; but that *chu* prevails among other classes, so far as my very limited observations extended, as also upon the Stage, of which I believe it to be an affectation.

I wish you may succeed to banish Provincial dialects from the United States, which is much more than has been accomplished in England;—And that you may have life & patience for the still more arduous & important enterprise of retracing languages to their common origin.

And am, Sir,
with much respect
Your obedt servt

From the publication of his first Dictionary, Webster became increasingly eager to compile a larger and more complete work. Toward that end he began to inquire as early as 1807 into the possibility of obtaining subscriptions for a series of years which would enable him to devote his entire time and energy to philological studies without detriment to his family. The custom of book subscriptions had prevailed in England, where that, or 'a patron,' were the usual methods of an author's reaching his public. But the United States were still far from being evolved for the intercommunication of ideas or the spread of culture, and though some few people responded, and very generously, the amount of encouragement received was

slight.[1] Even his old friends and colleagues adopted a hopeless tone, as the following letter shows.

From Rufus King. W. MSS.

New York May 25. 1807.

Dear Sir

I stand in need of your Excuse for not having sooner replied to your letters of February and April; concerning the subject of the latter, so far as my Observation has enabled me to determine, I am disposed to believe that the usage of giving to *t*, before *u*, the power of *ch*, has become general among the learned and higher classes of Society in England. It prevails at the Bar, in the Pulpit, and in Parliament, at the Universities, public Schools, and Theatres, as well as among persons of fashion of both sexes. The tone of London, in this, as among other Cases, is the tone of the Country, among those whose minds and manners are influenced by fashion; in respect to the numerous body of farmers, manufacturers and tradesmen, this innovation not having reached them, their Pronunciation remains that of the district in which they were born, or passed their early years.[2] When this innovation commenced, is a question concerning which I am without information, though I am inclined with you to ascribe its introduction to the Irish.

In respect to the more interesting Subject of your first letter, I am sorry to remark that I am able to discover but little Probability of your receiving adequate encouragement to continue to devote your Time and Talents to

[1] See Appendix XXVII. below.

[2] So late as 1901, 2, or 3, a Manila newspaper, urging the claims of self-government for the Filipinos, gravely contended as an argument that even in the British Parliament the members from the different parts of the island could not understand one another's dialect.—[Ed.]

the important, and laborious investigation in which, for so many years, you have been engaged.

Neither learning, morals, nor wisdom, seem any longer to be regarded as objects of public Esteem and favour, and we behold few or no indications of such change in y^e^ opinions and pursuits of the Nation, as would afford a reasonable hope that a sounder course of thinking and acting, is likely soon to prevail.

Wealth & Power, or in other words, money and Office, have become the ruling Passion of our People, and as these may be acquired without the Possession of Learning we can be at no Loss to understand, why, of late years there have grown up among us, a neglect of, and Prejudice against, Learning; why our Colleges have become Objects of jealousy; and why instead of protection, attempts are made, & encouraged, to undermine, and destroy their necessary discipline & Government.

It cannot have escaped your Observation, that in nothing has this Country suffered a greater and more injurious change of Opinion, than on the Subject of Education; which is known to have excited the earliest and most anxious Solicitude of our Forefathers; they in the midst of their difficulties founded Colleges, their Posterity in more favorable Circumstances neglect them; they regarded Colleges as the best Schools of wisdom & Virtue; we consider them as nurseries of Inequality, and Enemies of Liberty; and here as elsewhere, the unnatural Genius of Equality, the arch Disturber of the moral world, is permitted to seek her visionary Level, not by elevating what Ignorance and Vice have degraded, but by degrading what knowledge and virtue have elevated.

Notwithstanding my own Persuasions I have consulted some of the few Persons with whom I am in the Habit of freely conferring, but there seems to be so much Torpor and want of Exertion, such despair of sound Principles and honest views, that even the best men are with difficulty

roused from their Lethargy, and even then, appear to be restless and unhappy until they have sunk again into their hopeless indolence.

In this condition of the many, and with this Temper of the few, I find myself unable to offer you the Encouragement, that on every consideration, it would afford me so much satisfaction to impart, my poor & limited aid shall not be withheld, but it is too insignificant to be mentioned, and I can therefore only entreat you to be assured that I still remain, with sincere esteem and Respect Dear Sir.

[Signature cut off.]

From NOAH WEBSTER, Senior. W. MSS.

West Hartford June 9th 1807

EFFECTIONATE SON.

it is a Considerable time Since I saw you but I have heard from you often. it was sometime Before I recevd your letter that Mentioned the loss of your Child. by what I heard from you I have expected to see you at Hartford Before this time but I Suppose you was hindred by Publick or private Business. I am in want of Some money if you can help me Consistent with your own interest you will much oblige an aged Parent. I have Been at great Cost in purchasing post and rails to fence my wife's right of dower if you can help me to about ten Dollars or twenty I Believe I can repay you in the fall for I have let our pasture to men able to pay me in the fall. I have had Sickness which has Cost me much the winter past but now in Comfortable Health. I intend to have better ink before I write another letter.

I remain your

Effectionat Father

From SAMUEL LATHAM MITCHILL. W. MSS.

New York June 19, 1807

* * * To convince you that one of your Readers, at least has proceeded beyond the Preface, I would ask why the follow-

ing Aboriginal words may not be considered as naturalized, & worthy a place in the dictionary, to wit, *Esquàa*, a woman, *Pappoos*, a child, *Terrapin*, a tortoise, *Mummichog*, the smallest species of fish, Thiskitàma, a sort of nut?—as likewise, the following popular words, viz. & *Clévice*, a part of the iron-work of gears, *stall*, to stop when the Team is unable or unwilling to draw, *swivel-tree*, the wooden timber to which the Traces are fastened, *Original*, a male animal who has lost but one testicle by castration, *Glut*, a large wooden wedge to split logs, *Journey-cake*, a sort of extemporaneous bread from maise, *wilt*, to wither like newly-cut vegetable leaves, *Yellow fever*, a malignant fever, but uncontagious, and of local origin?—and also the ensuing words that is to say *Clape*, a sort of woodpecker, *Catbird*, a fine musical bird resembling the mocking-bird, Sheerwater, a sort of wild duck, *canvassback*, another kind of wild Duck of exquisite flavour, *Oldwife*, a third species of wild duck, *Boblincoln*, a small migrating black-bird, *Weakfish*, a salt water perch? I do not see *Populacity*, the vehement passion to court the multitude, as distinguished from *popularity* and *populousness*.

These I merely give you as proofs of my having turned over your pages with some Care.

It is wonderfully hard to bring a word sometimes into common life. For example, *maize*, is the name of "Indian corn", but the People will not use it, preferring the word "*Indian*" instead of it, and that frequently without any substantive. And how can this be helped?

I heartily wish you both fame and emolument from your Labours. And I may observe for your Comfort that you have already acquired a larger share of both than falls to the Lot of most of your Countrymen. As you have done something in Statistics, I send you the beginning of a Survey of New York City upon that Plan. The sketch was drawn by myself last fall before I went to Congress, and some touches have been given by Dr Miller, & by W. Johnson Esq. Materials are collected for a second Edition

corrected, enlarged, and beautified. * * * The information is compiled from original Sources, with great pains and expence. The *Manufacturers* and the *Religious establishments* of this City in the next Edition will be very interesting Articles: as will also those of the *Climate* and *Diseases*. I have already the bills of *Mortality* completely posted up by Mr Hardie from the official Returns to our Inspector for 1804, 5 & 6.

I shall expect to see my example followed at New Haven, Boston, Philadelphia; and the other considerable Places in our Country. Remember that I am still your friend & admirer, and that I feel myself happy in the Continuance of your esteem.

In the year 1807 Webster published *A Philosophical and Practical Grammar of the English Language*. This was a highly original work, the result of many years of diligent investigation, and of which Webster thought well to the end of his life. Many other earlier works he outgrew and spoke of in terms of merely moderate commendation, but he always respected this scientific effort after true grammatical principles.

In 1817, ten years after its publication, he writes: 'In my Philosophical and Practical Grammar, I have endeavored to correct the common errors on this point, and many others; and to supply some of the defects in the British Grammar—defects so obvious and material—that our school teachers cannot by them, resolve many of the most common English phrases. There are some things in Grammar which are arbitrary or indifferent—but when I have cer-

tain evidence that a rule or received proposition, is erroneous, or false, I cannot conscientiously continue it in a compilation of my own, intended for instruction.

*** When a man proposes anything contrary to established opinions, the question asked is, "have any of the rulers believed on him?" If not reject his doctrines as those of a presumptuous sciolist. But I will not conform to a practice in morals, or to a principle in science, when I have full evidence or certain knowledge that it is wrong.

*** When South and Johnson for instance call *if* a conjunction, and I discover that it is a verb, with no connective use, any more than *come* and *go*, I will not call it a conjunction. When Horne Tooke says that *for* is from a word signifying *cause*, *motive*, that *from* signifies *beginning*—and *to* signifies *act*, *effect*, and I find by resorting to higher sources that this is a mistake, I shall differ from the author, whatever risk I may encounter—nor shall I believe with him that *truth* is what a man thinks or *trows* when I know that this opinion is not *true*.'

When Webster published this grammar there were but few students of language on either side of the Atlantic, and the opposition was simply that of usage and habit. Yet the prejudice against a *change of nomenclature* was so great that this work has been far less known than it ought to be. It contains much valuable matter found in no other work of its kind, at

that period, and is believed to be the most truly philosophic grammar of the English language ever published in America.[1] Meantime it has been absorbed by the best writers on grammar who for years adopted its principles under various disguises or in various degrees, mixing with them the older and customary names and statements of grammatical forms, and in this modified and diluted form, the truths and facts which his patient investigation elucidated have been adopted and used by the public—even by the British themselves.

From THOMAS DAWES, Jun. W. MSS.

Boston August 28th 1807.

DEAR BROTHER:

I have received several letters from you, especially 2 of the present month, for which I am much obliged to you. I have attended to the subscription papers and have lodged them at the best places. I gave one to Wm Shaw who has displayed it in the Athenæum room. He says (and he is a man of strict truth) that he has prevented several (or many) criticisms from appearg in his Anthology: because he thot you treated ill in them. I am really fearful that you will lose money by your intended great work, let it be ever so meritorious. Your grammar (for which I thank you) I have studied with Delight and sincerely believe it to be built on the most perfect foundations. But I am not to enlarge upon *your* subjects in *this* Letter; the sole object of which is of another nature. It is to beg of you to communicate to me as soon as possible the very best information touching the character of young Joshua Huntington, son of

[1] Written between 1885 and 1892.—[Ed.]

Gen[l] H.[1] of New London—As he is but 21 the New Haven professors must know him. I have heard him once, and that is enough to determine his character as a *good* speaker (in that point is remarkably good.) But is he a *scolar* &c? My father & the other old South Deacons have written to him to come and try whether he will be a fit colleague to D[r] [Joseph] Eckley. The vote was unanimous. But I have since heard that he wants knowledge and genius. If he has the last, the first may come hereafter. But there's no doing without brains. I have promised my father to write this letter. And indeed I have some personal interest in it: as I have many inducements to carry my family back to Old South, should there be a good fellow settled there—not from dislike to Channing, who is one of a thousand, notwithstanding his Hopkinsianism. But I was 47 years at Old South and it is the temple of my Ancestors and I long to get back. But so much apparent versatility in me will not be excused unless the new change should be a tolerable one. On Monday next my Emily will go Southward with Emory & wife & niece, I believe by the Sound. I expect Son & Daughter Eliot will sail in the packet 25 Sep[r] I expect Hannah will be married in Nov[r] Sister Appleton & Mary & W[m] and Nat & wife and babe, I expect will all go with Charles & Hannah and squat down in Baltimore. 'Tis so determined. Mother Greenleaf is very well and in spirits. Love to Sister and the children,

Yours affectionately,

From THOMAS DAWES, Jun. W. MSS.

Boston 30[th]. August Sunday [1807]

DEAR BROTHER.

I should not have written by the last Mail had I then known of M[r]. Emory's determination to go by

[1] Jedidiah Huntington. See Hill, *History of the Old South Church*, ii. p. 316.

way of New Haven; of which I am extremely glad, altho it may perhaps incommode your dear family a little. For I have had the impudence to invite, very strongly, M^r. & M^rs. Emory to take one bed and my Emily Goddard and Miss Emory another under your hospitable roof, and all this without knowing whether it could be done. For there are times when families cannot lodge a friend, and there are times when such an addition is convenient and grateful. But upon this I have run the risk. The disposition of yourself and Becky and of all of you I *know*; let abilities and circumstances be as they may.

Pray be kind enough to mention in your letter which is to be the answer to my last, whether my dear Emmy has arrived *sound* and about her manner of finishing the journey, whether by water or land. I am this moment going to sit down to dine with all my 12, besides my wife and Eliot, for the last time until we all sit down together with Abraham Isaac and Jacob in the paradise of God (which sit^s. down &c I hope!)

Yours affectionately

I hope your *own* sweet Emily will be settled near you.

From OLIVER WOLCOTT. W. MSS.

New York Sept. 19. 1807.

DEAR SIR.

I have not been inattentive to your Letter of August 22^d, which was duly d^ld to me by M^r Perkins. I have no doubt that a number of subscriptions may be obtained, but I have thought it best, to endeavor to render you a real service, by ascertaining in what manner your plan would be rec^d by the public. With this view I have conversed with some of the booksellers & others acquainted with the different modes of disposing of literary works in this Country & now communicate the result of my enquiries.

It is very generally objected to your proposal, that the size of your Dictionary, & the manner in which it is to be published, & the sum required, are not ascertained, & (on account of impositions which are said to have been practiced) it is said that no payments ought to be required in advance, till the subscription is filled.

My experience of the world has satisfied me that it is in vain to reason with the greatest part of mankind, if they have to pay Ten Dollars, in consequence of being convinced. If as I presume a considerable sum is wanted, I cannot encourage you to expect success by means of a popular subscription, unless the public impressions are different in other places, from what they are in New York.

I wish that a different spirit existed in our Country from that which now governs it; we have able, generous & learned Men, but they want wealth. The Men of wealth are in various ways taxed for very considerable sums, but they have not the faculty of discriminating the most suitable objects of encouragement. I cannot promise more than that a disposition to serve you shall be exerted in any manner you may request. Mr King, Mr Benson, and Mr Trumbull have not been in Town since your Letter was recd.

I remain your Friend & obedt Servt

From Thomas Dawes, Jun. W. MSS.

Boston 20th. Sepr. 1807

Dear Brother.

The account you was kind enough to give me of Mr. Huntington was very satisfactory to my father, who wishes one other favor from you on the same subject, if within your power and not against your inclination, to grant it. That is, to procure and transmit some information why Mr. Huntington has omitted to notice two Letters sent to him by my father and the other two deacons of the old

South. The first was sent a month ago, the second, duplicate of the first, this day week. Each of them contained a copy of unanimous votes in his favor and requests to preach on probation. The sooner you answer this the greater will be your favor.

Yours affectionately,

The foregoing continued.

Boston 21 Sep

DEAR BROTHER

I have written the other leaves *separately* with intention that you might shew it to Mr. H:—if you should see fit, as of *your own* motion.

Tell Becca that her sister Dawes has been very sick for Ten Days and confined to her bed for the last 3; but that she seems to be convalescent; for which may the good GOD accept our praise. It began with Influenza, and one night when she was gettg. better and freely perspiring, she was called suddenly from bed to see one of the children who was sick. On her return, said she was chilled and had never felt so before. From that time she grew ill, and I have been in constant apprehension: but blisters and poultices and medicine and *patience* seem to be prevailing. Emily had a long passage in your packet but writes that it has done her good and that she was never better.

Our love to all of you.

From THOMAS DAWES, Jun. W. MSS.

Boston, Sunday Morn 11th. October 1807

DEAR BROTHER:

Knowing that President Dwight is at this moment at my Father's house, on a visit before bellringing for meeting (I suppose on the subject of Mr Huntington) I cannot

omit the opportunity of sending you by him a line about my *convalescent* wife. Every day for the 3 last, she has been got out of bed to her easy chair for an hour. Her fever has left her; and, tho' a skeleton, she eats a little beef with great relish, and takes more broth &c than she was able to do two months ago before her Influenza and Lung fever attacked her; for before those disorders seized her she was fast wasting with a *Marasmus*,—soon after the fever came upon her, her hearing, little as it was, almost departed and she said she could not pray for life, thinking she must be useless; and that her heart uttered only "Thy Will be done!"—She now hears as well as when you last saw her and she wishes, and has good right to *expect* to live with me some years more. At the worst of her illness her memory failed, and two days were entirely lost from her calender; and when it was returnᵍ it appeared to be in that state described by the gloomy author of the Night Thoughts.

'My soul fantastic measures trod
'O'er fairy fields, or mournd along the gloom
'Of pathless woods, or down the craggy steep
'Hurld headlong, swam the mantled pool,
'Or scal'd the cliff, or danc'd on hollow winds
'With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain.'

Among my consolations was the evidence that every medicine and every blister seemed to operate exactly as intended. The friendly assiduity of my two physicians was successful: and I am grateful to the giver of all good for restoring to me, as I think He is doing, this most excellent woman. Give my love to Becca and Emily and the rest. Sister Appleton and Cº. will leave this place Tomorrow week and travell slowly via New haven: and by them you will know all our family particulars.

Yours affectionately

To Joel Barlow.

New Haven, Oct. 19, 1807.

* * * A few gentlemen of this character, like yourself, duly appreciate the merit of my labors, but the number is small; my hope and expectations are that it will increase. You will recollect that Judge Trumbull and yourself were the only friends who, in 1783, ventured to encourage me to publish my *Spelling Book*. The attempt to correct English books was thought a rash undertaking, yet more than 200,000 copies now sell annually. My Grammar had its run, but has been superseded by Murray's. Both are wrong. I have lately published one on Horne Tooke's plan, which President Smith, of Princeton, pronounces the best analysis of the language ever published. If I can, I will send you a copy.

* * * I have in the press an abridgement of my Complete Dictionary for common schools, omitting obsolete, and technical terms, and reducing it to a dollar book. With the profits of these I hope to be able to finish my Complete Dictionary. If I could get two or three hundred subscribers to advance the price of it this would be all I should want; but I have no expectation of such patronage, though I am confident there would be no hazard to the subscribers except that of my life. It will require the incessant labor of from three to five years. My views comprehended a *whole system*, intended to lay the foundation of a more correct practice of writing and speaking, as well as a general system of instruction in other branches. It is time for us to begin to think for ourselves. Great Britain is probably in her wane, and I look forward to the time when her descendants will *reflect* some light back on the parent nation. But immense hosts of prejudices are to be subdued.

To the Same.[1]

New Haven, Nov. 12, 1807.

* * * For more than twenty years, since I have looked into philology, and considered the connection between language and knowledge, and the influence of a national language on national opinions, I have had it in view to detach this country as much as possible from its dependence on the parent country. It appears to me not only derogatory to us as a nation to look to Great Britain for opinions and practice on this subject, but I consider this species of dependence as extremely prejudicial, as it regards our political interest in a variety of ways which I need not *write*, because you doubtless think of the subject in all its bearings. But there is another evil resulting from this dependence which is little considered; this is that it *checks improvement*. Not one man in a thousand, not even of the violent political opposers of Great Britain, reflects upon this influence. Our people look to English books as the standard of truth on all subjects and this confidence in English opinions puts *an end to inquiry*. Our gentlemen, even in the colleges and professions, rarely question facts and opinions that come from English authors of reputation; hence we have no *spirit of investigation*: and numerous errors are daily propagated from English presses which become current in this country. I make not these remarks from prejudice against Great Britain. The fact would be the same if our people could all read French, or Spanish, and should read none but French or Spanish books. All nations have their interests and prejudices, which influence more or less all their popular writings. I have discovered many popular errors on other subjects thus propagated in the United States from our reliance on English books. But to confine myself to the language which I best understand.

[1] *Life and Letters of Joel Barlow*, Charles Burr Todd, pp. 245 and 7.

I can affirm that the standard English books abound with errors which nothing could have kept in countenance in this country but a blind veneration for English authorities. Our literary men investigate so little that they do not judge correctly of the talents and erudition of English writers, many of whom are not half so learned as our people suppose. * * * In truth, we shall always be in leading strings till we resort to original writers and original principles instead of taking upon trust what English writers please to give us. But I need not enlarge upon this subject. You must certainly understand it better than I do; you know the manner in which *book making* is carried on in England and how with a due portion of puffing from the reviewers, almost anything may obtain currency in this country. Leaving therefore a consideration of the cause of this evil let us attend to the remedy.

In this same letter we have a glimpse of the obstacles with regard to the larger Dictionary in Webster's own words.

The outline was drawn more than twenty years ago, but my circumstances compelled me to suspend the execution of it, for the purpose of getting bread by other business, until within a few years last past. Even now my resources are inadequate to the work; my income barely supports my family, and I want five hundred dollars' worth of books from Europe which I cannot obtain here, and which I cannot afford to purchase. I have made my wishes known to men of letters by a circular accompanied by certificates, and have issued a subscription paper, but I have not any encouragement that one cent will be advanced by the wealthy citizens of my country. I must therefore drudge on under all the embarrassments which have usually attended like undertakings.

Yet absorbed as he was in the studies and labors of word hunting, synopsis writing, and definition-coining, he still kept a wholesome interest in politics, in civic affairs, and in home duties and delights. He would turn aside from his favorite studies to take up the interest of the city, of the merchants, of theology, or of practical Christianity, and these labors, with their more immediate results, seemed to cheer and sustain him in his larger designs, which were to make the people of the United States speak one language and one tongue; he wished in furtherance of his purpose to have literary men combine and approve of his plans.[1]

[1] 'It was well Dr. Webster did believe in himself and his own work. His indomitable heroism has laid the foundation of a common tongue for the United States. They have one orthography, and nearly one pronunciation. His little spelling book has in a measure prevented the dialects which exist in the counties of England and the patois of the departments of France, and his views of language have been some of the shaping and controlling forces all over our continent.'*

* Reference not found.—[Ed.]

CHAPTER XII

RELIGIOUS AWAKENING

While writing, publishing and planning works on varied subjects, Webster was undergoing an experience which affected his entire after life.

His religious opinions had been gradually changing since early manhood, and were now manifested in a strong expression of his maturer convictions. He left college as an independent thinker and investigator of religious creeds. The very nature of his intellect made him an analyzer and discoverer, and he could no more accept religious truths at second hand than he could philological dogmas. Through the brief records of his diary the doubting spirit breaks out, and at that time he seemed ready to join the fermenting minds that later wrought in many ways so excellent and liberalizing an influence on the severe, narrow, dogmatic forms of old Calvinism. His morality was always of the highest type, his daily life reflected his sentiments, and his honesty, truthfulness, and sense of duty fulfilled the highest and fairest ideal of all possible relations between man and man, but of religious conviction he had little.

In the winter of 1807 Rev. Moses Stuart,[1] who was pastor of the first Congregational Church of New Haven, a man of large scholarship, fervent imagination, and deep personal piety, so wrought upon his congregation that a season of especial religious interest developed into a general revival as it was then called. The young Webster daughters were solemnly impressed with a new sense of their relations to God, and of the value of personal consecration to a devout life. They went to their father for counsel and he, under this stimulus, took up the study of the Bible anew, with a special view toward comprehending certain of the doctrines which he had felt when urged upon him were against reason. He spent some weeks in this review of his former opinions and objections, but as he advanced in his studies, his doubts rolled away, and he accepted humbly and enthusiastically the doctrine of the atonement, or redemption by Christ. When he arrived at this conclusion he lost no time in announcing it. He called his family together, and told them with much emotion of his new convictions, and that while he had aimed at the

[1] 'Moses Stuart, Hebraist, born 1780, graduated at Yale, studied law and became a tutor there 1802, studied theology, and was settled over a Congregational church in New Haven, 1806-10. Was professor of sacred literature at Andover, 1810, devoting himself to the study of Hebrew and filling its chair at Andover during his entire active life. He wrote a Hebrew grammar in 1813, on which he was obliged to do the type-setting, because he could find no compositors who knew the Hebrew characters. Through his interest in German philologists and archaeologists he greatly stimulated critical Bible study.' He died in 1852. See *Lamb's Biographical Dictionary of the United States.*

faithful discharge of parental duty, there was one sign and token of headship which he had neglected—the duty of family prayer. He commenced at once to read the Scriptures, and led his household in prayer. From that time he continued the practice until his death. He, with his two elder daughters, Emily and Julia, made a public profession of their faith in April, 1808, and the third daughter, Harriet, was soon added to the number when only twelve years old.[1] In connection with this change in the family's religious views the letters which follow are inserted.

To Oliver Wolcott. Conn. Hist. Soc.

New Haven May 13th. 1808

Dear Sir

The present Crisis in this country seems to call for extraordinary attention & perhaps for extraordinary measures. What shall be done? Is there no way to unite the *northern* or *commercial* interest of the United States, against a *non-commercial* administration? The northern states have lost, by their internal divisions, that weight in the National councils, to which their wealth, number & resources entitle them, & which they maintained during the revolution. The present struggles of parties with us are of no use—at most they produce only alternate temporary triumphs; while the best interests of the country are overlooked & sacrificed. The triumphs of party gratify a few men with offices, but the mass of our people derive no benefit from the predominance of one or the other; while the country is weakened, & can present no vigor of strength agt the policy or force of foreign nations. This subject has occupied

[1] Webster's fifth daughter, Eliza Steele, was born December 21, 1803. His youngest daughter, Louisa, was born April 12, 1808. A second son, Henry Bradford, born November 20, 1806, survived but a few weeks.—[Ed.]

much of my reflections for months—& in conversation with influential gentlemen I find a general opinion prevailing that some efforts ought to be made to unite the sound friends of the country, of both parties. Should the attempt succeed it is suggested that George Clinton should be supported for President, Governor Strong or some Massachusetts gentleman for Vice President, & the Gov^{t} be removed to Philadelphia. Perhaps a better arrangement may be made, but some combination aiming at a union ought to be made. If it should succeed, well—if not, we shall be in no worse condition than the present.

In some points the federalists are wrong—they are wrong in attempting to palliate the conduct & measures of Great Britain. They ought to meet the opposing party on the ground of conceding, to the full extent, the unwarrantable abuses of her maritime power. And I think both parties wrong in attempting to crush each other. Neither party can be crushed, nor ought it to be attempted. But if the substantial men of both parties can be drawn from their present warfare, be induced to renounce their present distinctions & names, & unite on some *general points* of policy, we may succeed in taking the administration out of the hands of the southern or anti-commercial interest. Is not the *common commercial interest* of the northern States, their rallying point?

It is in contemplation to have a meeting of the principal characters of this State during the present session of the Legislature at Hartford. Some observations, tending to assert popular opinion, will be published next week, which I will transmit to you. In the meantime pray let me know your sentiments on this subject.

I am, Dear Sir, with much respect,
Your Obd^{t} Serv^{t}

From Rev. Jedediah Morse. W. MSS.

Charlestown May 31st. 1808.

* * * I rejoyce with you in the increase of your family blessings, & especially in your religious prosperity. My

kind regards to Mrs. W—— in which Mrs. M. joins me, & believe

me sincerely your friend

In August, 1808, he made the first draft of a memorial to President Jefferson, pointing out and protesting against the injuries inflicted upon all the states 'eastward and northward of Maryland' by the embargo.[1] One passage reads: 'We know that an opinion has prevailed that a suppression of commerce will ultimately tend to encourage manufactures & render us less dependent on foreign commerce for articles of essential use. But in our apprehension this opinion is not well founded. We believe on

[1] We find an eight paged manuscript of Webster's with the heading 'ASSOCIATION of AMERICAN PATRIOTS for the purpose of forming a NATIONAL CHARACTER, asserting the RIGHTS, securing the INTERESTS and maintaining the HONOR, the DIGNITY, and the INDEPENDENCE of the United States.'

This flamboyant title heads an article which was published in the *Connecticut Herald*, May 17th 1808, over the signature 'Public Spirit.' Its purport is plain as a protest against the embargo and as a plea to discard party rancors. Only two passages are noteworthy.

'If the ruling party, tho a majority are opposed by a minority almost equal in number & respectability the administration must unavoidably be feeble, & national energy must sink under the contest of parties nearly balanced.'

This belief in the weakness of majority rule was prevalent both in America and in Europe at that time, and only after many years has the policy been pronounced a working success. —[Ed.]

The other passage treats of that particular difficulty which in the general opinion became the leading cause of the war of 1812.

'Next to a firm resolution to support a *free elective government*, remove the obstacles to an adjustment of differences with Great Britain by passing a law to *register native American seamen* in a proper court for that purpose, with ample evidence of their nativity & prohibit under severe penalties any foreigner from entering on board our vessels.'

the other hand that commerce, by augmenting capital, & opening free channels for exporting domestic productions, is the *nurse of manufactures* as well as of agriculture.—And we appeal to the history of Europe to verify the opinion; for facts, we apprehend, will furnish a better text than theory on this subject, & prove that manufactures have *flourished most* in *countries which carry on the most commerce.*'

To Joel Barlow.

New Haven, Oct. 13, 1808.

Sir:

I had intended to give to the public a short review of your 'Columbiad' before this time, but two causes have prevented me: first, a feeble state of health and much occupation during the summer past, and, secondly, a doubt whether I can execute this purpose in a manner to satisfy you and my own conscience at the same time. Of the poem, as a poem, I can conscientiously say all, perhaps, which you can expect or desire, but I cannot, in a review, omit to pass a severe censure on the atheistical principles it contains. The principles of irreligion you avow, of which I saw a specimen in a letter you wrote to Royal Flint in 1792 or 1795, form the partition-wall which has separated you from many of your old friends. No man on earth not allied to me by nature or by marriage had so large a share in my affections as Joel Barlow until you renounced the religion which you once preached, and which I believe. But with my views of the principles you have introduced into the 'Columbiad' I apprehend my silence will be most agreeable to you, and most expedient for your old friend and obedient servant,[1]

[1] *Life and Letters of Joel Barlow*, Charles Burr Todd, p. 220. The editor states that Barlow never answered this letter.

From Abraham Webster. W. MSS.

Dear Brother Lebanon Nov^r 10^th 1808

I received your kind letter of Septem^r last and it has given me great joy to hear that God is carrying on a Glorious work in New Haven and that your self and two Daughters have been subjects of this Great work. Is it so that the Holy Spirit has renewed hearts and you are savingly united to Christ I think I can cordi[al]ly unite with you in admiring the Sovereign Grace of God who has made you to differ from many others—the work is his humility and submission is ours. It is a time of great stupidity in this place with regard to religious concerns the little Church here has been rent in consequence of a M^r Cazier from Connecticut removeing to this place and preaching amongst us his Sentiment and Character I suppose you may learn in New Haven he tells me he has preached there he says all the Churches in Connecticut are antichristian except a little flock he gathered in South Briton. Through Divine Goodness my little family [has] been healthy the year past * * *

The Summer past has been favourable for Crops in General. On the 19^th of Sep^t. we experienced an uncommon hail Storm the hail stones were many of them four inches long and as big round as a hens egg they were [illegible] and fell with such force as to split Shingles on the buildings split apples and even bunkins [pumpkins] to pieces corn suffered the most of any Crop as other Crops were mostly gathered it extend[ed] about 6 miles in length an[d] ½ a mile in breadth

My wife and Sophia unite with me in Love to you & Sister with your family

From Thomas Dawes, Jun. W. MSS.

Dear Brother: Boston October 25^th. 1808

Much time has elapsed since either of us wrote to the other. Who of us wrote last is not of consequence, nor

within my recollection. A private conveyance now offering, I send by it the information that Becca's Boston relatives are well—I include Cambridge, Salem and Quincy. I intended to write by Doctor Dwight; but he escaped me; not, however, without my having heard from his distinct and unaffected utterance, the most noble discourse upon the *Sabbath* I ever heared. Had Felix been present, he would have trembled. I am not certain of all the points which he and Doctor Morse and company contend for; not having yet been 'extra flammantia mentia mundi.' The sermon I have mentioned did not relate to those points. It was greater and more useful on that very account. I have inclosed a pamphlet for your perusal. There is nothing in it novel to such a researcher as N. W. but I give it to you, as a *text* only, upon which I request your opinion; that I may know whether it be true that N. W. has lately recieved some impressions from above, not in the ordinary way of ratiocination. What I now write is as sincere as you can possibly wish your friend to be. I am no *dis*believer. I have had many doubts, but never was sure, as many dogmatists are. When young I red the life of Col. Gardner. But I have tho't the true answer to it was, that one swallow does not make a Summer. I have thought that we must exercise our *reason*, and that Faith is not knowledge. I have red everything I could obtain, pro and con, about the Xtian revelation—*and I believe it*—but I never could believe, *satisfactorily*, in the conversion by a ray of light. I have thot' that to exercise our talents, such as we have, to obtain knowledge, and honestly to abide by the dictates thereof, was all that could be expected by our maker.

Your's with affection,

This letter drew out a long answer from Webster stating the rise and progress of his religious life and conviction, which is so typical

of the period that we venture to quote from it largely.

To Thomas Dawes, Jun. W. MSS.

(Copy.) New Haven Dec 20th 1808.

* * * This candid avowal of your own opinions demands from me, a faithful and explicit exposition of my own, and the reasons on which they are founded. Errors are always mischievous, but never so much so as in the concerns of our immortal souls and in the relations which exist between God and ourselves.

Being educated in a religious family, under pious parents, I had, in early life some religious impressions, but being too young to understand fully the doctrines of the Christian religion and falling into vicious company at college, I lost those impressions and contracted a habit of using profane language. This habit however was not of many years duration—profaneness appeared to me then as it now does, a vice without the apology which some other vices find in human propensities, and as unworthy of a gentleman as it is improper for a christian.

I rec'd my first degree in Sept. 1778, at a time when our country was impoverished by war, and when few encouragements offered to induce young men to enter into professional employments. Having neither property nor powerful friends to aid me, and being utterly unacquainted with the world, I knew not what business to attempt nor by what way to obtain subsistence. Being set afloat in the world at the inexperienced age of 20, without a father's aid which had before supported me, my mind was embarrassed with solicitude, and overwhelmed with gloomy apprehensions. In this situation I read Johnson's Rambler, with unusual interest and with a visible effect upon my moral opinions, for when I closed the last volume, I formed a firm resolution to pursue a course of virtue through life, and to perform all

moral and social duties with scrupulous exactness; a resolution which I have endeavored to maintain, though doubtless not without many failures. I now perceive that I ought to have read my Bible first, but I followed the common mode of reading, and fell into the common mistake of attending to the duties which man owes to man, before I had learned the duties which we all owe to our Creator and Redeemer.

For a number of years just past, I have been more and more impressed with the importance of regulating my conduct by the precepts of Christianity. Of the being and attributes of God I have never entertained a doubt, and my studies as well as frequent contemplations on the works of nature have led my mind to most sublime views of his character and perfections. These views produced their natural effect of inspiring my mind with the highest admiration and reverence, mingled with gratitude; and for some years past, I have rarely cast my eyes to heaven or plucked the fruit of my garden without feeling emotions of gratitude and adoration.

Still I had doubts respecting some of the doctrines of the Christian faith, such as regeneration, election, salvation by free grace, the atonement and the divinity of Christ; these doubts served as an apology for my forbearing to make a profession of religion; for though I could never read or hear that solemn declaration of our Savior, "whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father who is in heaven," without some compunction and alarm; yet I endeavored to justify my neglect by a persuasion that I could not conscientiously assent to the usual confession of faith required in Calvinistic churches as the condition of admission to their communion. That is in plain terms, I sheltered myself as well as I could from the attacks of conscience for neglect of duty, under a species of scepticism and endeavored to satisfy my mind, that a profession of religion is not absolutely necessary to salvation. In this state of mind I placed great reliance on good works,

or the performance of moral duties, as the means of salvation, although I cannot affirm that I wholly abandoned all dependance on the merits of a Redeemer. You may easily suppose that in this state of distraction, and indecision of opinions, I neglected many duties of piety.

About a year ago an unusual revival of religion took place in New Haven, and frequent conferences or private meetings for religious purposes, were held by pious and well disposed persons in the Congregational societies. I felt some opposition to these meetings, being apprehensive that they would by affecting the passions too strongly, introduce an enthusiasm or fanaticism which might be considered as real religion. I expressed these fears to some friends and particularly to my family, inculcating on them the importance of a *rational religion*, and the danger of being misled by the passions.

My wife, however, was friendly to these meetings and she was joined by my two eldest daughters who were among the first subjects of serious impressions. I did not forbid but rather discouraged their attendance on conferences. Finding their feelings rather wounded by this opposition, and believing that I could not conscientiously unite with them in a profession of the Calvinistic faith, I made some attempts to persuade them to join me in attending the Episcopal service and ordinances. To this they were opposed. At some times I almost determined to separate from my family, leaving them with the Congregational Society and joining myself to the Episcopal. I went so far as to apply to a friend for a seat in the Episcopal Church but never availed myself of his kindness in offering me one. In this situation my mind was extremely uneasy. A real desire of uniting myself to some church by a profession of faith, a determination not to subscribe to all the articles of the Calvinistic Creed, and an extreme reluctance against a separation from my dear family in public worship, filled my mind with unusual solicitude. On examining the creeds of the two churches however, and the conditions of admission to

church communion, I found less difference than I had supposed, as to the essential doctrines of Christianity, and in a conversation with Mr. Stewart, our pastor, some of my objections to our own confession of faith were removed. During this time, my mind continued to be more and more agitated, and in a manner wholly unusual and to me unaccountable. I had indeed short composure, but at all times of the day and in the midst of other occupations, I was suddenly seized with impressions, which called my mind irresistibly to religious concerns and to the awakening. These impressions induced a degree of remorse for my conduct, not of that distressing kind which often attends convictions, but something which appeared to be reproof.

These impressions I attempted to remove by reasoning with myself, and endeavoring to quiet my mind, by a persuasion, that my opposition to my family, and the awakening was not a real opposition to a *rational religion*, but to enthusiasm or *false religion*. I continued some weeks in this situation, utterly unable to quiet my own mind, and without resorting to the only source of peace and consolation. The impressions however grew stronger till at length I could not pursue my studies without frequent interruptions. My mind was suddenly arrested, without any previous circumstance of the time to draw it to this subject and as it were fastened to the awakening and upon my own conduct. I closed my books, yielded to the influence, which could not be resisted or mistaken and was led by a spontaneous impulse to repentance, prayer and entire submission and surrender of myself to my maker and redeemer. My submission appeared to be cheerful and was soon followed by that peace of mind which the world can neither give nor take away.

This my dear friend, is a short but faithful narration of facts. That these impressions were not the effect of any of my own passions, nor of enthusiasm is to me evident, for I was in complete possession of all my rational powers,

and that the influence was supernatural, is evident from this circumstance; it was not only independent of all volition but opposed to it. You will readily suppose that after such evidence of the direct operation of the divine spirit upon the human heart, I could no longer question or have a doubt respecting the Calvinistic and Christian doctrines of regeneration, of free grace and of the sovereignty of God. I now began to understand and relish many parts of the scriptures, which before appeared mysterious and unintelligible, or repugnant to my natural pride. For instance, I was remarkably struck with the 26th verse of John, 14th, 'But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, *he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you*'—a passage which I had often read without realising its import—in short my view of the scriptures, of religion, of the whole christian scheme of salvation, and of God's moral government, are very much changed, and my heart yields with delight and confidence to whatever appears to be the divine will.

Permit me here to remark in allusion to a passage in your letter, that I had for almost fifty years, exercised my talents such as they are, to obtain knowledge and to abide by its dictates, but without arriving at the truth, or what now appears to me to be the truth of the gospel. I am taught now the utter insufficiency of our own powers to effect a change of the heart and am persuaded that a reliance on our own talents or powers, is a fatal error, springing from natural pride and opposition to God, by which multitudes of men, especially of the more intelligent and moral part of society are deluded into ruin. I now look, my dear friend, with regret on the largest portion of the ordinary life of man, spent 'without hope, and without God in the world.' I am particularly affected by a sense of my ingratitude to that Being who made me, and without whose constant agency, I cannot draw a breath, who has showered upon

me a profusion of temporal blessings and provided a Savior for my immortal soul. To have so long neglected the duties of piety to that Being on whom I am entirely dependent, to love whom supremely is the first duty, as well as highest happiness of rational souls, proves a degree of baseness in my heart on which I cannot reflect without the deepest contrition and remorse. And I cannot think without trembling on what my condition would have been had God withdrawn the blessed influences of his spirit, the moment I manifested opposition to it, as he justly might have done, and given me over to hardness of heart and blindness of mind. I now see in full evidence, the enormous crime, the greatest, man can commit against his God, of resisting the influence of his holy *Spirit*. Every sting of conscience must be considered as a direct call from God to obey his commands; how much more then ought man to yield to those pungent and powerful convictions of sin which are unequivocally sent to chastize his disobedience and compel him to return to his Heavenly Father.

In the month of April last I made a profession of faith; in this most solemn and affecting of all transactions of my life, I was accompanied with my two eldest daughters;[1] while I felt a degree of compunction that I had not sooner dedicated myself to God, it was with heartfelt delight, I could present myself before my Maker, and say 'Here am I, with the children which thou hast given me.'

Mrs. W. was confined at the time and could not be a witness of this scene, so interesting to her, as well as to us who were personally concerned, but you may easily conceive how much she was affected, the first time she met her husband and children at the Communion.

I have now, my dear Sir, given you a brief narrative of the facts which were the subject of your kind enquiries. I may perhaps in a future letter offer you my opinions on

[1] See Appendix XXVIII. below.

some doctrines of my religious faith; but I am not confident of the propriety of what may be deemed an obtrusion. Of your benevolence, sincerity and affection for me, I have had sufficient proof and my heart reciprocates all your kind wishes for my welfare. I have long been accustomed to consider you as the best of men, and if we have not corresponding views of Christian principles, my friendship for you will remain undiminished. Accept my sincerest love and that of my wife and daughters for yourself and Sister D. and all the family. From your affectionate brother.

In these latter days when the lament is widespread over the lost art of letter-writing, perhaps the reading of the above may reconcile some grumbler to the paucity of family correspondence.—[Ed.]

Webster's personal letter to his brother-in-law was followed by a still longer statement of *Reasons for Accepting the Christian and Calvinistic Scheme*, which was sent to Judge Dawes on February 23rd, 1809, and was published in *The Panoplist* in July of the same year. It aroused much interest in theological and lay circles, and called out many replies. Gov. Bowdoin published a reply under the title *An Old-fashioned Churchman*, while Dr. Spring, Rev. William Jenks, and Abiel Holmes wrote with warmth and praise of this effort in a new direction, while many anonymous letters expressed the gratitude and interest of their writers. Webster was now asked, and even urged, to turn his attention to the writing of tracts and theological discussions since he had

gained so strong a faith and 'a personal experience' ably and sincerely expressed. But he wisely declined these overtures. His paths were chosen in the direction of philological research, with only occasional excursions to the field of politics.

The letters of these 'brothers in edification' are too long to be given, but they make quaint reading. Dr. Spring (Newbury Port, Aug. 16, 1809, W. MSS.) reads 'the communication in the Panoplist with sublime emotion,' and proceeds to ask for 'private answers' to the following questions:

'1. What is the generick affection or exercize of holiness? Is it disinterested? Is its object the highest enjoyment of God and all his friends?

'2. What is the generick affection or exercize of sin? Is it self love or selfishness? Is its object the separate or private gratification of the senses? * * *

'9. Are Armenians[1] correct in holding that God elected characters rather than persons, or are the Calvinists correct in holding that God elected & reprobated persons rather than characters, tho' characters are the only object of his approbation or disapprobation?'

There are seventeen of these questions, of which these few only are given as specimens, and the letter concludes with this paragraph: 'I have Sir used much freedom in these questions, because I find your mind awake and your

[1] Arminians.

heart engaged. Please to excuse my freedom. Make my respects to your Lady, love to your lovely children. Love to Brother Stewart. Tell him to write me soon what is saying, & doing, & *what is contemplated.*

'From your friend & brother'

Endorsed: 'Not answered. I have not time nor talents, nor reading to qualify me for theological discussions. N. W.'

From JAMES HILLHOUSE. W. MSS.

City of Washington March 22d. 1808.

SIR

Inclosed is a letter in answer to yours of the 16th. Inst., our del[e]gation were of opinion that a formal address from them to the people of Connecticut, would, at this time be inexpedient. I have hastily thrown together some thoughts on the topicks mentioned in your letter, which however I do not wish to have published, unless, upon a consultation with Doctr. Dwight, Mr. Goodrich, Mr. Baldwin, and Mr. D. Daggett, it should be determined that a publication would be of *real use.*

[Signature cut out.]

From JAMES HILLHOUSE. W. MSS.

City of Washington March 22d 1808.

SIR

Your letter of the 16th. Inst. came duely to hand; and it is with pleasure I inform you, that I do perfectly accord with you, and our friends at New Haven, in the opinion, that Col: Pickering's letter to Governor Sullivan, for the purpose of communicating information to his constituents, *the legislature*, and *people of Massachusetts*, is a very important State paper, and is deserving the attention of every man in New England.

If our legislature were in session, I should not, and in my opinion the other gentlemen of our delegation, would not hesitate to communicate to the Governor, and through him to them, such information of facts and public measures as might be in our power, and which we should deem important to be known to our constituents, to awaken their attention to their own *best interests*, which I think are in jeopardy, and may suffer irreparable injury. And it being in conformity to the antient usage of our State, for the Governor to recieve and communicate such information, I am inclind to believe it would be well recieved. (But the expediency of addressing, at this time, a formal official statement through any other channel might be doubted.)

The people of Connecticut, tho' suffering under the pressure of the *embargo*, are, as far as I can learn, quiet; hoping for and expecting its speedy repeal. If it is to be continued they will not be satisfied, without knowing its *real object*, and *duration*; of which at present they are wholly ignorant. Neither has any information ever been given, that has convinced me of the *propriety* or *policy* of that harsh measure; which from present appearances is to be kept on; and, for ought I see, must prove *ruinous* to the *commerce* and *Navigation* of New England. From observations made by the friends of the Administration and the embargo, they would seem to wish to induce a belief that it is a measure, which, tho' attended with present inconvenience and injury, will eventually prove beneficial to the country; by *discouraging* commerce, and thereby *promoting* manufactures and agriculture; as tho' the latter could flourish without the former: A policy this, in exact conformity to what I have always understood to be the policy of Virginia, which has a powerful and commanding influence in our national councils. The people of that State have embarked very little in commerce & consequently feel but little interest in its prosperity, or disposition to protect it. My fears are, that the plan of building up manufactures and agriculture,

at the expence of commerce, will not be discovered to be *visionary* and *impracticable*, untill, by the experiment, it shall be found to have ruined the navigation and commerce of the northern States. The embargo cannot be considered as holding out substantial encouragement to manufactures, unless it is to be an *abiding measure*; and it cannot be thus continued without ruining commerce; and bringing inevitable distress and ruin on multitudes of our inhabitants. As well might the planters of Virginia be called upon to work in their fields in the place of their slaves, as the commercial and seafaring people of New England, invincibly wedded to navigation and commerce, be required to quit both, and to become manufacturers, or to migrate and make farms in the wilderness.

The misfortunes which the New England people are suffering and are likely to suffer, must, in some measure, be imputed to their *own folly*; in suffering themselves to be wrought up into parties, to such a degree as to have no efficient voice in the public councils of the nation. New England may be said to have had scarcely any influence in Congress for seven years past; the party divisions of their Senators and Representatives having *nutralized* their votes. The commercial concerns of New England being thus left in the hands of men not *practically* acquainted with commerce, and entertaining *visionary theories* on that subject, how could it be expected that those concerns should be well taken care of? Could the voice of New England be fairly expressed on the floor of Congress, many errors on the subject of commerce and navigation would be avoided. But so long as the gratification of *party feelings* and *party views* is considered and regarded as the *supreme good*, her best interests and most essential concerns will suffer.

The negotiation with M^r. Rose, to which we have all been so long, and so anxiously looking, for a favourable termination, is unfortunately broken off; and no accomodation of our differences with England is likely soon to take place. Even the affair of the Chesapeake is not settled. The

Presidents message relative thereto, and the papers which accompanied it, are ordered by the Senate to be printed; and as soon as I receive them, I will forward a copy addressed to the mayor of our city, for the information of the citizens; and also of other communications relative to our affairs with England, which being voluminous have not all been read, and cannot be detailed in a letter. There are also some papers communicated by the President respecting our relations with France, all which I have not yet heard read, but which I will also forward, so far as they are allowed to be made public.

The negotiation was broken off on a punctilio respecting the President's Proclamation. Great Brittain seemed to consider the extension of the Proclamation to their whole navy, for the offence of a small squadron, as a strong measure, especially as it was issued before we had demanded satisfaction, or had reason to believe the act would be justified by the British nation; but when that government promptly and before any demand made, & even before the knowledge of the fact had reached our Minister in London, disavowed the conduct of their officer in making the attack, and proffered honourable amends, they considered the outrage as the act of an individual and not the act of the nation; and that our government on receiving official information of the disavowal, and prof[f]er of satisfaction, ought to have revoked the proclamation.

Our government say, that the outrage on the Chesapeake not being the sole ground of the Proclamation, there haveing been other wrongs that would justify the measure; and it being also a measure of municipal regulation, to preserve peace within our waters; they are not bound to remove the proclamation, as a preliminary to a negotiation on the point of satisfaction.

M[r]. Rose contests this point, on the ground, that the attack on the Chesapeake was the prominent subject of complaint and the only one that required the reparation,

for which his special embassy was instituted. M^r. Rose was by his instructions confined solely to the affair of the Chesapeake; and that being considered by his government as the ground of the Proclamation, it was made a positive article of his instructions, that the removal of the proclamation should be a preliminary to negotiation. As to the Proclamation being a municipal regulation, to preserve peace in our harbours; M^r Rose, contends that to render it justifiable, in this point of view, it ought to extend to the vessels of war of all nations; as otherwise it might be considered as a departure from an impartial n[e]utrality.

Thus the business has ended. I have endeavoured to give you a sum[m]ary of the ground on which the negotiation failed; the reasoning you will have at large in the documents I shall send you. My opinion is, that it was unwise in the British government to make it a positive article of the instructions of M^r. Rose to insist on the revocation of the Proclamation as preliminary to a negotiation, and indiscreet in our government to refuse to receive satisfaction on the ground of such a punctilio. It is sacrificing *substance* to *form*, which I would never do.

The termination of the negotiation has left *us* in a very unpleasant situation. Both governments seem to have agreed that all treaty on other points must be suspended until the affair of the Chesapeake is settled. Two attempts having failed one in England and one in America, I do not know how we are to meet again for the purpose of negotiation. What then is to be done? Are we to declare war against England? Are we to keep on the embargo untill great Britain shall be humbled, and shall make concessions to the satisfaction of our government? Are we to instruct anew our Minister in London? or are we to rest satisfied with the recall of Admiral Berkeley from the American Station, with the declaration of the King of Great Britain in his speech in parliament, in which in the face of the nation and the world he has declared 'the attack on the

Chesapeake an unauthorized Act of force,' and 'that he did not hesitate to offer immediate and spontaneous reperation,' —and the other acts of the British Government on that subject. I regret extremely that when both parties professed a sincere desire to obtain the object, some way should not have been found out to effect it.

When I came to Congress in Oct^r. last, I thought the *path* which the *honor* and *interest* of the United States required us to take was as plain as a *turn-pike road.* But I confess I am now lost: our affairs are involved in a labyrinth, from which it would seem difficult to extricate them. Every American must feel an anxious solicitude for the honor and interest of his own country; and must and will unite in measures of defence, and means of sureity against the demands of any foreign government, which are inconsistent with our *honor* and *independence.*

I had hoped, we should have settled our differences with England, so as to have *recommenced* our commerce; and to have been at liberty to unite the wisdom and energy of the nation to resist any claim, which the Emperor of France may make upon us to unite in a plan, which, I have no doubt, has long since been formed and adopted by him, of uniting all nations in a commercial warfare against England; in the project, alike *visionary* and *deceptive*, of establishing the liberties of the seas. for my part, I am not so anxious about the *liberties of the seas*, as *our liberties on the land*, which I should not think *very safe*, if the Emperor of France, who is already all powerful on the land, should also obtain the dominion of the sea. ALL our RIGHTS and LIBERTIES, on the SEA and on the LAND, would then be swallowed up in ONE VAST GULPH OF DESPOTISM. That IRON DESPOTISM, which now GOVERNS CONTINENTAL EUROPE, and would then RULE THE WORLD.

With sentiments of due respect,
I am,
Sir,
Your ob^t. Hum^l. Ser^t.

How bitter was the feeling at this period against Jefferson is evidenced by the following:

From TIMOTHY PICKERING. W. MSS.

City of Washington Dec^r. 12. 1808

DEAR SIR:

It lays in my mind that some years ago, on a question of M^r. Jefferson's title to literary fame & the character of a mathematician & philosopher, you published observations, I believe on his report on weights and measures, in the course of which you stated, that he was indebted for everything involving *science*, in that report, to a person who had been a teacher of mathematics in the University of Pennsylvania. I wish to be informed, as particularly as may be, of the facts & circumstances. If I have not mistaken the case, and you have a recollection of it, your early answer will very much oblige me. A greater *political* imposter has perhaps rarely appeared in the world; and indeed every distinct passage in his life seems marked with hypocrisy.

Mr. Hillhouse said he should send you his speech in the Senate on his resolution for repealing the embargo acts. Mine followed the next day, and is now enclosed.

I am dear Sir respectfully

Y^r. obed^t. serv^t.

To TIMOTHY PICKERING. Pick. MSS.

New Haven, December 17, 1808.

SIR,

I have received your favor of the 12th with the inclosure, for which please to accept my particular thanks. I had the day before received one from Mr. Hillhouse, and I will thank you or him to send me Mr. Giles's.[1] The views you have respectively taken of the embargo and its effects, are strikingly just, in my apprehension, but will avail little in opposition to predetermined system, or violent party spirit.

[1] William Branch Giles, senator from Virginia.

I hope however your speeches will be extensively published, and that in the country, they will have some effect. I hope the opposers of Mr. Jefferson's plans and measures will be tranquil, and leave the *measures* to have their natural effect upon the public. Passions are increased and opposition rendered more violent and fixed by a collision of opinions. The federalists will do all they can to arrest the progress of bad measures, in transitu, but I think they had better be moderate in their opposition to them when passed. Such measures *must* in *time* work a cure. The evils we must suffer will be beyond calculation, but we had better submit to them, than not to be cured.

In regard to the facts respecting the Report on Weights and Measure,[1] I well recollect that I had been informed, many years ago, that Mr. Jefferson was indebted to Dr. Kemp,[2] of Columbia College, for the mathematical calculations. The fact was stated in my paper, if I do not misremember, and Dr. Kemp called upon to contradict the statement, but he never did. Of these facts I have a pretty distinct recollection, but I could not easily turn to the paper, nor can I affirm that my information respecting Dr. Kemp's agency in that Report, was correct.

If I recollect right, the idea of regulating weights and measures by a pendulum, was first suggested in the First Volume of Transactions of the Society for promoting the Arts, Agriculture, etc.—an English work, with which you are doubtless acquainted.

I will thank you to make my respects to Mr. Hillhouse, and my acknowledgements for his communications. I shall be much obliged by the communication of the more interesting speeches, and also of such Reports as contain valuable *facts* for preservation, as the Exports and Imports, etc. I have the honor to be, Sir, very respectfully your obedient servant.

[1] Jefferson's report, made in 1790.

[2] John Kemp. No letter from or to Kemp is in the Jefferson Papers.

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston February 6 1809

How many times have I fixed, my dear Webster, for taking notice of your most interesting Letter of two sheets upon the most interesting of all subjects in which immortal man is concerned! And even now what I am to write can be little more than an apology for not having written. 'Tis a stormy hour; and I am in the parlour of my *widowed* mother; and I seize upon it to say something appropriate to *your* condition & mine. I suppose no man ever had a better father than I lost the second day of this year. On Sabbath Evening of the first of January, I visited him according to my custom; which custom I had not omitted any Evening for many years, but from some necessity. My mother and Mr. Somes, my brother-in-Law, were present. He had worshipped at the Old South the first part of the day, and when I saw him at Noon he said he was unfit to go out in the Afternoon and should not have gone in the morning but for a strong inclination to begin the year in the house of GOD. He said he was richly paid for going, by the sermon of young M^r^ Huntington, that touched his case and cheared his hopes. When I saw him in the Evening, he renewed his conversation about the sermon. I told him that I had recieved a very extraordinary Epistle from my brother at New haven; but that I had lent it to my minister Channing (the only person out of my parlour who had then seen it) and that I would send for it; which I did, and I read it to him as plainly as my disturbed utterance of it would permit; for I never read it without tears and a broken voice; so touched are my affections with it. That Letter, said my father, is going to do a great deal of good, and spoke *sensibly* of its contents for half an hour. But soon after said he was cold at the very heart. However, he took a glass of warm wine and a bit of biscuit and went to bed about 9 o'clock and went quietly to sleep.

He awoke at 2 in the morning and told my mother he had been restless from too great a weight of clothes; but would not have them diminished, because he said he should be cold again; then went to sleep, and at four o'clock awakened my mother by turning violently over in his bed. She spoke to him, but he could not answer except by seizing her hand and giving it a shake, as if to say farewell, on which he went into a steady snore, from which moment he never appeared to have any sensation; and at Ten his spirit ascended to its redeemer! I say this with confidence! for no man that I have known ever led a better life, and, where that is the case, *my* doctrine is that the grace of GOD follows as a reward, tho' nothing is merited. And I much doubt whether you and I should be found to differ much if we could spend an evening together; which opportunity I hope to have at your house or mine before many months. Your letter is in the highest estimation in my family, and my friend, S. Eliot, Esquire who had published here the little pamphlet I sent you, because of his belief in its tenets, has nevertheless expressed the greatest veneration for your letter which it produced. Write me soon, and I will write you more fully on the subject. I have read Gardner's life again, *lately*, and have much fewer objections to *your* account than to his. We are all well. love to all. paper exhausted.

T. DAWES, (no longer Junior!!!)

Marginal note—'Slow comes the Verse that real grief inspires.'

Tickell on the Death of Addison.

With the ill-success of obtaining general subscriptions toward the work of his larger dictionary Webster seems to have lost heart as is shown in the following letter:

To James Madison.[1]

New Haven Feby. 20. 1809

Sir.

I am engaged in a literary pursuit, which I believe to be very interesting to my country, & in this opinion I have the concurrence of Gentlemen of the first talents in this State. In this pursuit however I have neither assistance nor patronage. I want many books which are not to be procured in America, & which cannot easily be obtained by orders, as some of them are rare in Europe. In addition to this, I have not the means of purchasing them to the extent I wish, much less to bear the expenses of a voyage to Europe. I have thought it possible, tho' by no means probable, that I might perform some service for government, in Europe. I know not that I have the requisite talents to justify an appointment to which any considerable emolument is attached, & I cannot consent to make a voyage merely as a messenger. Possibly an occasion may occur in which the objects of government may be answered in coincidence with my own private interest & views. I am sensible, that, to any appointment of this kind, there is a weighty objection, that, on political subjects, I differ from the present administration, & if the next administration shall pursue a system substantially the same, I must be opposed to it on principle. I therefore make no specific request; for while I know myself sincerely the friend of my country, & of a republican government, I must say, I think the measures of the present administration are fundamentally wrong. On subjects of this kind it becomes not me to interpose my private opinions; but as the administration will,[2] in a few days, devolve into your hands, it must be important to you to know the opinions of Gentlemen in all parts of the country. The

[1] Madison Papers, Library of Congress, vol. xxxiii. p. 98. Madison was then Secretary of State.—[Ed.]

[2] When Madison succeeded Jefferson to the Presidency.—[Ed.]

crisis is very interesting, & great wisdom is necessary to allay the present ferment. I will therefore take the liberty of suggesting a few thoughts, confiding in that candor which I have often witnessed in your character.

That the embargo cannot be much longer continued, is certain. Hitherto respectable men of all descriptions have generally frowned on attempts to violate the laws; & for the tranquillity that has prevailed, the administration is much indebted to political opponents, as well as to friends. But the enforcing law entrenches so far on principles hitherto held sacred, that it will meet with firm opposition from all the federalists, & Mr Jefferson's supporters are either deserting his cause, or becoming so lukewarm, at least in great numbers, that his strength, in the northern states, is materially impaired. The experiment of suspending commerce has been a hazardous one, & such as no future administration, I think, would venture to recommend.

There is another subject which I will mention, as I once saw, in some communication of yours, a remark that there was an 'habitual opposition,' to the administration. So far as foreign relations have given rise to that opposition, I shall wave any observations on the subject. But a great part of that opposition has sprung from the interior administration. On this subject, permit me to remark, Sir, that opposition will be habitual, until there is an entire change of principles in regard to appointments. In selecting persons for Offices, the President has generally, if not exclusively, consulted those who profess to be his particular friends. In all governments, I believe, those who make the most professions of attachment to the Chief Magistrate are *Office-Seekers* & of course *flatterers*. May it not be affirmed that in every government on earth, Office-seekers are improper persons to be consulted, in regard to public measures; especially in regard to appointments? Will they not deceive, whenever it is for their interest?

In every society & in every town, there are some persons,

whose conduct, for a series of years, has secured the confidence of their fellow-citizens. This confidence is founded on a knowledge of their personal worth—their religion, their virtue, their talents, their integrity, their industry, or other praise-worthy qualities. These men are the friends of their country—whatever may be their opinion of a particular Chief Magistrate, they are always well-wishers to the peace and prosperity of their country. As the greatest part of such characters have no wish to obtain any office, & as the most respectable men are the least forward to recommend themselves, their opinion of proper persons to fill offices will always or almost always secure a Chief Magistrate from imposition. For instance, in this state, if the President, instead of attempting to support a party by appointments, & consulting a few confidential friends, will obtain the opinion of the Justices & Selectmen of the town in which an appointment is to be made, I pledge myself, Sir, that he will generally find the most suitable characters & faithful men. And what is, if possible, of more consequence, he will secure the confidence of people of both parties.

Hitherto, Sir, many of the appointments in the States where I am acquainted, have been very improper—some of them, an outrage upon the community. And unless the system shall be entirely changed, it is impossible for government to have the public confidence. The present system will no longer answer the purpose of supporting the administration—the means are not equal to the end. Nor do I know that any means will now be sufficient to effect the object. They will not, without a material change of measures in regard to foreign relations. But as to the internal administration, whenever a chief magistrate shall adopt the mode here mentioned, or one substantially the same, he will certainly find faithful Officers, & in a great measure neutralize opposition.

The great body of our respectable men, in New England, are believers in the Christian religion, & warmly attached to its support; and they have more confidence in men who

adhere to that religion, than in those who reject it. The Chief Magistrate who disregards this consideration, in his appointments, in these states, will very much impair the public confidence in his administration. Whatever may be his private opinions on any subject, he will, I apprehend, always find it his interest to accommodate his administration to popular opinions, when not directly subversive of government, or opposed to the public safety.

As these remarks proceed from the purest motives, I have no doubt you will duly appreciate my intention, & do me the favor to believe, I am

With great respect
Sir.
Your most Obed^{t}
& most hum^{e} Servt

We do not know what, if any, answer was returned. But it is not likely that a favorable consideration would have been given to such a request coming from so strong a supporter of the old federalist party.—[Ed.]

From Thomas Dawes. W. MSS.

Boston 13th July 1809

Dear Brother :

Were I a heathen, I might think fatality concerned in obstructing my visit to New Haven. Not that I yet despair of seeing it next week; but because new impediments have risen to make it doubtful. The Supreme Judicial Court opens here next monday by adjournment; and more especially to try a case of great interest on an appeal from a decree of mine as Judge of Probate on the will of one Cap^{n} Fellowes of Boston who died at Havanna 2 or 3 years ago. It relates to property of one third of a million Doll^{s}. My decree has been once affirmed. But, new evidence appearing, a new trial is to be had; and my

presence to elucidate multifarious documents is required. It *may* be tried on Monday. But you know the uncertainty of Courts! I will not say of law. Doctor Morse shew'd me your revision of *your* epistles to *me*. I took the liberty of altering the introduction and to intitle it 'a communication selected from 2 Letters of N. W to his friend in Boston; such parts thereof as were not of a more private concern, being published at the earnest desire of some pious gentlemen who had read the originals'—I recite the title from memory. It then begins at that part where you say you had red the little pamphlet, (omitting your notice of my father). I should never have had the least objection to both letters, as they originally stood, being addressed to *me*; as they both seemed to take for granted my *doubts* as to some opinions contained in them. But in the *digest* which Dr. M. now publishes, it not only looks as if both correspondents thought alike; but there is one opinion touch'g which *my* doubts are the strongest, that *your* digest *enlarges* upon as if supported by evidence that no one can contradict. I mean that part which supposes the universal father to select some favorites on whose imaginations he sees fit to flash peculiar and instantaneous light. I will not say that the Apostle Paul was not one of these; when he was struck blind. But *perhaps*, (I would speak cautiously and tenderly) it is not scriptural to lead the *many* to expect such interpositions. As by the grace of GOD I am what I am, I see no pride in finding *myself* enabled to obey the common rules of piety or morality. I must work out my *own* salvation: and I see no self conceit in the consciousness of doing that which I am enabled to do by him who made me. Surely there are such things as praise and blame, rewards & punishments. I am afraid there is less of humility than we are aware of, in some persons supposing themselves the more particular objects of providence. GOD forbid that I should have the least doubt in the sincerity of many who think themselves thus favored. And indeed they *are* favored,

if a holy life follows their illumination. As to yourself, I am convinced you was a sincere christian long before the period of time which you consider the beginning of your piety. I consider your experiences as the consequences of your former goodness of conduct and intentions. We shall not differ as to the *source* of even *these*. That you have advanced in *duty* since you have had the impressions alluded to, I doubt not: and that you and all of us may still more and more advance in light until it shall become perfect day is the humble prayer of

yours,

HON. JUDGE DAWES.[1]

New-haven, July 25, 1809.

DEAR SIR,

I am often asked, what progress I have made in the compilation of my proposed Dictionary; and when in all probability it will be completed. To these questions I am not able to give precise answers, as the field of inquiry enlarges with every step I take. I deem it proper, however, to state to my friends that new discoveries of important facts of which I had not the slightest suspicion, when I began the investigation, add almost daily new incentives to my zeal, and very much increase, in my apprehension, the value of researches into the origin and progress of languages. It is a common opinion that etymological investigations are dull and uninteresting in the prosecution, as they are useless in practice. But I find this to be a great mistake, that must have arisen from an entire ignorance or imperfect views of the subject.—In opposition to this opinion, I can affirm, that few studies are more interesting, either as furnishing a gratification of curiosity, or real improvement of the mind.

It seems to be taken for granted by men who are reputed scholars, and who are really so, in most branches of literature,

[1] From the *Columbian Centinel*, Boston, Mass., Aug. 2, 1809.

that *language* is a subject perfectly well understood, even so well, as to preclude the necessity of further investigation. Indeed, many seem to think that our language in particular is so perfect, so clearly understood and defined, that it cannot be improved. The student is so well satisfied with the works of VARRO, VOSCIES, CAMDEN, HICKS, SKINNER, JUNIUS, HARRIS, LOWTH, and JOHNSON, that he scarcely thinks of examining HORNE, TOOKE, WHITER, and GEBELIN; and even conceives it a species of sacrilege to violate the remains of those giants in literature, with the unhallowed spirit of inquiry and scepticism. I was once a slave to this prejudice myself; I say to this *prejudice*; for I am now persuaded it deserves this appellation; and that this prejudice now interposes an immense obstacle to the progress of truth and improvement in this country.

In opposition to this opinion, the discoveries that I have already made, enable me to state, with confidence, that scarcely any thing belonging to man and his works, is so little understood, as the *origin* and *structure* of language; and that the English writers above-named, whose works are considered as standard authorities in the language, barely entered the threshold of the subject. I feel the responsibility attached to this remark; but my conscience bears me witness that it is not dictated, in the smallest degree, by vanity, but by deliberate judgment, and that I am possessed of all the means of establishing the truth of the observation.

In addition to the advantages of ascertaining the true orthography and signification of words—advantages well understood and universally admitted; etymological investigations are extremely useful in illustrating history, and probably to an extent not generally believed. Of the following points, however, I have already obtained most satisfactory evidence:—

1. That the opinion of the descent of all nations from one pair, is well founded, and susceptible of new and satisfactory proof.

2. That whatever differences of dialect might have been introduced at *Babel*, languages intirely different were not formed, as the radical words in the principal languages of *Asia*, *Africa* and *Europe* are still the same.

3. That although the oldest writings extant are in the *Hebrew* language, yet the Hebrew language is not older than the *Arabic*, *Celtic* and *Teutonic*; and so far is it from being the most ancient, and the original language from which the other *Assyrian* dialects, the *Chaldaic*, *Arabic*, and *Phenician*; and the *Greeks*, *Latin*, and other European languages are derived, that it is only of cotemporaneous origin, with the other primitive languages and many of its words which are supposed to be *radical*, are in fact formed on roots which are now to be found in the *Celtic* and *Teutonic* dialects in the west and north of *Europe*.

4. As a consequence of the facts above stated, it is found necessary to recur, in some cases, to the languages of nations who migrated far to the west, south and north, to find the radical signification of *Hebrew* words. Thus the word, *teraphim*, which PARKHURST deduces most violently, from a *Hebrew* word signifying to *relax*, *abate*, &c. considering the *teraphim* as objects of fear, which *appall* the soul, is formed on a root which exists not in *Hebrew*, but is found in most of the living languages of *Europe*, and in the *Welsh*, it remains unaltered. *Teref*, (tereph) a house. The word signifies *Household Gods*—equivalent to the *penates* and *lares* of the *Romans*. In the same manner the Latin *Lar* had its origin in a word existing in the *Irish*, *Welsh*, and *Contabrian*, or *Basque*, signifying originally the *floor of a house*.

5. From a series of facts, it is demonstrable that the ancestors of the western nations of *Europe* inhabited *Syria* and *Judea*, anterior to the settlement of the *Hebrews* in that country; for many cities, &c. bear names which they had before the Jews entered that country; which the Jewish writers retained in their works, which names or their roots

are still retained in the *Celtic* and *Teutonic* dialects; but which cannot be translated by *Hebrew* roots.—Hence the translators of the Bible, by referring such names to *Hebrew* roots, have mistaken their signification. Thus *Bethshean*, or *Beth-shan*, they translate, the *house of the tooth*, from the resemblance of *shan* to the Hebrew name of *tooth*—but *shan* is our word *sun*, pronounced in the ancient oriental dialect *zhan*, or *zan*. Beth-shan is the *house* or *temple of the sun*, in *Greek Heliopolis*, a name given to the place by the *Sabians* who had a temple to the sun there, before the *Israelites* possessed the land of *Canaan*.

In like manner I find many English words which appear to be insulated, having no connection with any other English words, belong to roots which, with numerous families, remain in the Ethiopic and Amharic dialects in the heart of *Africa*.

It is also very evident that nothing but etymology can ever reach the true origin of the pagan mythology. The historical and poetical writings of the ancients exhibit on this subject a mass of fables. But I have been able to ascertain, to a good degree of certainty, the true origin of many of the pagan deities; their names being retained in their primitive literal sense, by the descendants of the first races of men, in the west of *Europe*, or the interior of *Africa*. Thus the word *Cronus*, the name of one of the oldest of the Grecian deities, is still found in the Celtic and Contabrigian dialects, as it is in the Coptic or old Egyptian. It is simply the *Cruin* of the Celtic nations, which signifies *round*. It was first applied to the great circle of the year, or revolution of the sun (that is, of the earth,) the measure of the year; and afterwards became the representative of *time*, which is measured by the revolutions of the heavenly bodies. This is the origin of *Cronus* or saturn. The Copts and Contabrians applied the word to *heaven*, from the *rotundity* or vaulted appearance of the sky. On this subject, I have already obtained evidence that will correct many errors in *Bryant*, *Faber* and *Gebelin*; who, but especially the two

former writers, wandered in conjecture, from the circumstance of neglecting to consult the languages of the first races of men, who are most remote from the heart of *Asia*.

The families of men, which first peopled the earth, migrated in diverging courses. Their progress from the center of *Asia*, may be distinctly traced by their languages; and their progress or courses being radiuses of a circle, and the first races of families removing to the greatest distances, as they were invited by the conveniences of hunting, or impelled forward by succeeding tribes, their descendants and their languages are to be now found at the periphery of the circle, in the north and west of *Europe*, &c. These languages retain many primitive words which are lost or disguised in the Greek and Latin; and an inattention to this circumstance has retarded the progress of this kind of enquiries, more than any other circumstance.

But nothing amuses me more than a developement of the process by which mankind have formed abstract terms, or rather applied the names of visible objects and action to express abstract ideas. I cannot, however, enlarge on this subject in a letter.

I have accumulated such a mass of materials for a Dictionary, materials which no other person could use to advantage, that I think it my duty, as it is my pleasure, to prosecute the work; provided I have health to sustain the labor, and property to defray the expenses, of the compilation. But I fear my pecuniary resources will not be adequate; and that the past labor of some years will be lost, from inability to prosecute the design. Were I a single man, I should probably leave my country, and seek patronage in a country where undertakings of this kind are never neglected, much less opposed.

The labor requisite to accomplish the work upon my plan is certainly double to that which Dr. *Johnson* bestowed upon his dictionary. My etymological inquiries alone (a part of the subject on which *Johnson* bestowed no great pains, as

he merely copied his etymologies from other authors)—will probably incur as much labor as the whole execution of Johnson's works.—But I am pursuaded that the fruits of the investigation will well repay the labor.

But every part of the work requires labor. Even the definitions which constitute the whole value of *Johnson's* Dictionary, are deficient in precision beyond any thing I could have imagined, without a minute attention to the subject. Nor could I have believed, without at least a partial enumeration, that *Johnson* had given currency to between *two and three thousand words*, which are not English—having never been used either in conversation or writing. This is a very serious evil; for his authority some times misleads men into the use of words which are not known to readers; and what is perhaps worse, great numbers of these illegitimate words are copied into *Entick*, *Perry*, and other small dictionaries for schools. This was one of my reasons for compiling small dictionaries, in which our American children may find no words but such as are used, and really form a part of our language. Equally important was it to omit some vulgar and obscene words, which the English compilers have injudiciously inserted.

To supply the defects of the English Dictionaries is a very important object. From the great improvements in various sciences, within half a century, the English dictionaries are rendered deficient in five or six thousand words, which are found in the best authors. To supply these is a very important part of my design.

The objection which has been often made that I am about to give currency to vulgarisms and Americanism, has no foundation.—We have very few Americanisms in use, most of those which are called so, are Anglecisms, and I have often smiled to see news-paper criticisms on words called *American* which have been sanctioned by the best English usage for twenty or thirty years. Even the English reviews are not free from the same hasty criticisms. Some

Americanisms must be admitted, for they form an essential part of our language, being intended to express ideas which are peculiar to the country; and I beg to know what is the difference, in point of authenticity, between respectable American usage, and respectable English usage?

If any persons are solicitous about the orthography proposed, they may make themselves very easy on that score. Established orthography will not be disturbed, and changes will not be admitted, except in a very few instances, to correct most palpable errors.

Such are the observations on my design which you are at liberty to communicate to your friends, with a view to remove any ill-founded opinions they may entertain, respecting the utility or importance of the undertaking, and the manner in which it is proposed to execute the work.

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston 1st August 1809

DEAR BROTHER

When you write me again, don't pay the postage, let the packet be ever so large; because it is always worth more to me than the pennies come to, and because, tho' not rich, I am richer than you. I took your letter to the repertory office. Dr Park was on a journey. I called yesterday to know its fate. His copartner and brother told me he could not print it, unless he could add the ours [r's] and k's &c. I thought this very impudent in a printer and took it to Ben Russell who gladly received it and has printed it, with an introduction signed Thomas Dawes for To-morrow's paper; which I hope will have your approbation. I have seized the occasion to mention your Elements of U. K.[1] with, I hope, sufficient tho' qualified praise. I have told the *truth* about it, viz that there is no better book, and that it would have been in every school boy's hands had its author sacrificed such trifles to the common notions of people as to retain the *a*

[1] *Useful Knowledge.* See Bibliography below.

in breadth &c, about which, however, I say that scholars differ, and that so valuable a book ought not to be condemned for an objection of doubtful foundation. If I can get people to talk about it, I may be able to help it up to the notice it deserves.

I regret exceedingly that I did not tarry another day at New Haven; which I could have done, had I foreseen that I could not put my Providence plan into execution. I was obliged to go straight home when I came to the stage that turns off from Pomfret to Providence. M^r^ Channing says I should have found a very strong intellect in your M^r^ Stuart and his conversation would have been rich. I confess I should have liked to hear him explain how predestination and free will consist. Channing says he thinks exactly as Stuart thinks. It is inexplicable to *my* understanding; but I am very humble at my own blindness when I cannot but believe that Channing's eyes are so open: For upon those subjects which he handles he is the most perspicuous in sentiment and style of any man I hear preach. By the way he never touches those dreadful points: But *your* folks make them articles of your creed necessary to the escape from everlasting burning. I was struck with horror when I read the printed creed of your first church, as being necessary to be signed by a *youth* before being permitted to obey the injunction of his savior. But I forbear. Help, Lord, my unbelief!

I took into the stage, the morning when I left you, Judge Baldwin. I was charmed with him long before I knew who he was, and regretted at parting with him. There is a dryness and pointedness in his talk that I like in a *man*. If you see him, tell him I sent a line to his brother Sherman inform^g^ what he requested.

Remember [me] to Becca and her dear tribe. I have told the younger ones of my own tribe how your little W^m^ spanield round me and jump'd by my side, parvus Jülus, and how he dragged the babe about on a teaboard with a twine

string &c. I have made a very entertaining story of my 5 days perigrination. Tell Becca I took up Mercy Scollay at Medfield. Next day Sisters Bell & Appleton & Peggy visited Mercy at Melvill's.

From an Anonymous Correspondent. W. MSS.

New York, August 17th 1809:

I have just read in the Panoplist your explanation and defence of the Doctrine of the Gospel, with what satisfaction I will not pretend to describe; it is luminous and concise and deserves to be printed by itself and handed among those unhappy men who under a profession of the name of Christ, do not submit themselves to his righteousness. I sincerely hope you will continue your useful labors in this vineyard of gospel truth and prove a blessing to the Church of God. Permit me to notice one passage which however consonant to public opinion and perhaps the opinions of most Christians, I consider erroneous, p. 62. 'We are placed on this earth in a state of *trial* and *probation*, furnished with intellectual powers to learn the character of God and our own duty etc.' I once thought so too, and was some what startled when I first heard this sentiment opposed by the Rev. Dr. Mason, of this place. He showed that our first parents were in a state of probation and trial, but that when they sinned and broke the covenant the *probation* was at an end; we from that moment became rightful heirs of the curse, and are saved only by free mercy and sovereign pardon, as rebels and not probationers.

Samuel Whiting wrote (New York 15th September 1809) W. MSS.:

'A few individuals are desirous of printing it [Webster's theological letter of Dec. 20th 1808] in a small *Tract form*[1] for gratuitous

[1] See in Bibliography below, *The Peculiar Doctrines*, etc.—[Ed.]

distribution, believing as they do, that it would greatly subserve the cause of Divine Truth, and stop the mouths of *Gainsayers.*' And he goes on to ask if there were 'any additions or variations which would render the letter more useful as a tract,' closing thus: 'And were it not that we know the *author*, and his *avocations* we should say with the reviewers of *The World without Souls*, "The pen which can produce such a work, should not dare to be idle."

'I am dear Sir with sincere and affectionate respect your most obed^{t} serv^{t} (in behalf of several friends of the Truth as it is in Jesus.)'

From NOAH WEBSTER, Senior. W. MSS.

Hartford, Nov. 28 in the evening, 1809.

EFFECTIONATE SON,

I re'd yours of E. Belden. I acknowledge with gratitude the Respect you manifest to your aged Parent in sending the 10 dollar Bill which I Rec'd of E. Belden, and your Good wishes for my comfort, and hope the Divine Blessing may rest upon you and your family. Brother Steele has written to you concerning the Genealogy of your Grand Mother, Katherine Steele; that she was cousin to Gov. Belcher. I have often heard that he was Governor of New Jersey, when that was a colony of Great Britain. * * * I heard from Abraham by a Neighbor of his about five weeks since; that he and his family were well. He wrote to me, if I would come and live with him, he would come with a Sleigh and fetch me. On the ensuing winter I wrote to him that I should not be willing to take such a journey in the cold weather. But it is probable, if my life and health continued as at present I should be willing

to go next summer. My friends here send their respect to you and your Family.

My pen is poor and it is now night.

I subscribe myself

your Effectionate Father

During these years of self doubt and anxiety all his correspondence reflects his mood of mind, even when we only have the letters received by him to refer to. Witness the following:

From JAMES KENT. — W. MSS.

Albany, March 20. 1810.

DEAR SIR

I have delayed acknowledging your favor of the 10. of December last in order to try, according to your Suggestion, what might be done with the Members of our Legislature who are now in Session. I am sorry to say that there is no Prospect of encouragement here. a large dictionary is, in the first place not calculated to strike attention or command Interest, & the din of Politics now drowns every other demand. We have a great Election on hand which requires liberal Contributions from the Purse, as well as from the Pen, in order to print & disseminate the requisite Information. There are but two or three Gentlemen here that manifest any desire correspondent with your wishes, & if *Samuel Johnson* was here on the spot, it would be the same thing. His dictionary is rarely purchased by any Body in this quarter, but the present winter is the most unfavorable that could be imagined. Political Subscriptions are pressed to the utmost & no body will make any other. I thought it best to state that *present* reliance upon Albany would be fruitless. M[r] H. Bleecker & myself, are ready to make any advance you wish for ourselves. Permit me to say I feel the highest respect for your Learning and Talents and

Exertions, & I wish you could be crowned with the public Munificence commensurate with your deserts. But you have [a] much better opinion than I have of a fierce & stormy democracy, if you expect much Liberality. I do not perceive it, & instead of growing better, I think the Genius of our Government is to render us worse. We are making a prodigious Effort here for General Platt.[1] The Prospect is encouraging, & yet it seems to me almost impossible that so pure & virtuous a Character can be successful. If he should it would cure me of much of my Spleen.

My respects to M^rs^. Webster & believe me.

[Signature cut out.]

The following letters furnish another explanation of his ill-success in obtaining subscriptions for his larger Dictionary, viz.; his open identification with the Calvinists.

From MOSES STUART.[2] Misc. Letters, N.Y.P.L.

Andover, 16^th^. March. 1810.

DEAR SIR

After passing through a variety of scenes, I am at last settled down at Andover & quietly pursuing my professorial duties. They are pleasant to me; & if I had my family here, & my N. Haven friends too, I think I should be sufficiently happy.

I am persuaded our Seminary will be a great blessing or curse to the community. Under God, much will depend on the Professors. It is an arduous task, to teach 60 young

[1] Jonas Platt, jurist, 1769-1834, was defeated in his candidacy for the governorship by Daniel D. Tompkins. Served in the State Assembly, Senate, Council, and as Justice of the Supreme Court of New York. See Lamb's *Biographical Dictionary of the United States*. For a letter from this college mate of Webster's see p. 87 below.—[Ed.]

[2] Misc. Letters, N.Y.P.L.

Ministers. I hope I shall be duly impressed with the importance of being faithful.

Before I came here, I had no idea, that these regions were so near the North Pole! Cold, distant, & benumbing as death. The *Dons* here, with their cocked hats, & old wigs, & formidable cloaks, & *angular* manners, & frigid precision, & distant civility, & high ideas of Massachusetts superiority, & Bunker Hill spirit, absolutely put one upon trial. Let any man be warmly engaged for religion here, & he is at once a Hopkensian, or an enthusiast. O what a wonderful difference between this, & my dear people at N. Haven! The calculation cannot be made.

How often do I yearn for our dear church Meetings & our solemn Sabbaths. But the Same Spirit, who called the dead to life among you, is able to breathe on these dry bones, & inspire them with life.

The Anthology is outrageous against you. I believe it will do good, & promote the very cause, which it means to destroy. May the Lord turn their haughty & unfriendly designs into foolishness! Be assured, the object of their vengeance is more against your religion than against you; & be also assured, that your friends will view things, in their just light.

Fennell has attacked me, in Boston, in a little publication, entitled 'Something.' It is a mere fetch, to circulate his publication & make money, which is all that he cares for.

I rejoice to hear that the prospect brightens, of your obtaining Mr Porter. May the Great Head of the Chh. send him to you, in the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of peace.

Be so kind as to let me know the prospect of obtaining a Minister, with some particularity.

Present my most sincere & cordial affection to Mrs. W. & your family. The remembrance of them *all* is deeply engraven upon my heart. Tell dear little Harriet one word from me, '*The vows of* God *are upon you.*' Emily &

Julia I trust will also feel the weight of this consideration. I imagine myself, at this moment, in the midst of this dear circle—but I must not—I dare not indulge in the fond recollection. I should be tempted to repine at my present lot.

May the God of Heaven bless you and yours, is the prayer of your

Affectionate Friend,[1]

The theological differences will be mentioned several times later by various authorities as arousing prejudice against Webster's works. His religious essay in *The Panoplist* had seemed to array the weight of talent and learning among Massachusetts Unitarians in opposition to his philological labors as a consequence of his pronounced Calvinism.

It is difficult to realize the bitterness of the old controversies, for in those days differences of creed frayed friendships by their friction, or burnt out with their hot zeal tender family ties, blinding even far-sighted scholars to values outside their own denomination. The *odium theologicum* is a deadly hate, disguised under a conscientious duty, and denominational prejudice, under other names and shapes, assailed Webster's philological works. Dr. Bowdoin answered the essay in *The Panoplist* over the signature of 'An old-fashioned Churchman,' and was in turn replied to by Webster over that of 'A Calvinist' under the title of 'A word to an

[1] Professor Stuart, who had just taken the chair of Sacred Literature in the Theological Seminary at Andover—a position he filled with much learning and enthusiasm—had been pastor of the church in New Haven in which the Webster family worshipped.

old-fashioned Churchman.'[1] The closing paragraph of this letter is worth quoting as declaring Webster's mood of mind.

But are not the Calvinists good members of society? Are they not good citizens, good friends, good neighbors?[2] Is there not a cordial friendship and a constant reciprocation of kind offices between the Calvinists and Episcopalians? 'Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?'[3] Why then should the indiscreet zeal of a few men be suffered to disturb that harmony, and excite jealousies between brethren, the children of the same merciful parent, who are bound by the sacred laws of religion and morality to live together in peace? How can a Christian reconcile it to his own conscience to exhibit to the world a part of his brethren with features of distortion and deformity? Is this a sample of the love and charity which Christ and his apostles uniformly inculcated? Even admitting that one denomination could throw an odium on another, would this subserve the cause of religion?

If there ever was a time when the citizens of a country ought to live in harmony on religious subjects, this is peculiarly that time. An interesting, and it may be an awful crisis in our political affairs, forbids us to encourage a spirit of jealousy and animosity. Duty to our country, ourselves, and to our posterity calls upon us in imperious language, to frown upon every attempt to foster prejudice and excite dissensions among our fellow citizens.

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston 12th. January 1811

Dear brother—I recieved your *anxious* letter on Thursday and would have answered it then, had I not then just recieved intelligence of the wreck of my son Goddard's brig

[1] See Bibliography below.

[2] Compare 'Merchant of Venice,' Act III. Scene i.

[3] Malachi, chapter ii. 10th verse.

on our coast at the very moment of his packing up his trunk to come on shore at the Vineyard after a *successful* voyage. His short letter is before me dated '7th. Jany at Holmes's hole.' He says 'my vessel is on a reef of rocks, my *usual* fortune pursues me; but I am as tranquil as any one can be who is probably reduced in one minute from enough to have enabled me to set up shop at home to a— a— but enough of this.' 'I was below packing up a small trunk, expectg to start overland for Boston and to be with you To morrow evening—but GOD'S will be done!'

Strange as it may seem to you, brother Webster, this is a small trouble compared with some I have met since I saw you: the greatest of which I cannot put upon paper. My little Eliot family, now 4 in number and every one of which 4 is very dear to all of us, are now setting up a temporary housekeeping at New Bedford, with *borrowed* furniture; *borrowed* lest some creditors of Ritchie and Eliot should dismantle their little castle. I need not tell you that such a circumstance must be among our *secrets*. I never lost anything by Eliot exceptg the expense of 3 or 4 years support in the family which their virtuous and interestg company much more than paid for. But I have met with *two losses* since I saw you which spunged me of every dollar of personal estate my father left me and some hundred dollars anticipated from those rents & incomes of the real estates, intended by my father's will for our *support*.

The *fee* of those real estates he wisely gave to his 12 children. The losses just mentioned have no connection with *any Greenleaf* or with any concerns growg. out of the *old matters*. Those losses amount to more than 5000 dollars; from the interest of which I was able to do some charities and to anticipate enough for decent furniture for my girls; without breakg. in upon the *rents*, which together with my Judge salary, brot our year round not only comfortably but handsomely and notwithstanding my family often consists of 20.

Now from this statement, which I assure you is faithful, I ought not to repine. Because notwithstand^g. the *loss*, the funds that are left are sufficient to excite our gratitude. But my power of helping friends is diminished. I am waiting for weather to go and see our blind brother whose wife has brought him another boy. They live upon what some people would consider starvation. But their piety magnifies and sweetens every crust of their bread. John too has met with *his* loss. I had obtained for him the office of organist at my M^r Channing's Church; the salary of which paid his rent and 50 dollars more. Strange to say, they have *removed* him—or rather, an outlandish Italiano who tickles the ears of fools more than *he* can, in sober Psalmody, has supplanted him, tho' not in the hearts of the minister and deacons and three quarters of the worshipers, but the *Choir* and the giddy have had their way; as is too often the case in musical subjects. My Appleton family I suppose are in Liverpool. 'Tis not yet time to hear of them. I believe Charles is successful. My son James arrived, I hope, at Rio Janeiro, not long after Goddard left it. James is to tarry there until 21, apprenticed to Brown and May 2 young men of *religion* as well as industry and capacity. I mention that *first* quality: because I know how much you set by it. I have good hopes of James: & so I have of Harrison who is at Baltimore with Nat Appleton, another *good* man.

Within a few days I shall converse with John West upon *your* subject: But what can be done, I know not. If I had any particular expectations or hopes, or any plan in my head for your succour, I would not now mention it, from a fear of your being again disappointed. It would be a useless task to say why your hopes were not realized before. But soon after your visit in this quarter I could perceive a sudden alteration in the intentions of some of the Bible Society to whom I believe some of your observations in some circles had been aggravated. Cabot who had taken up your case

pretty zealously, I perceived, *as I thot*, had dropped it. I tho't the same of a number of others. Your 'overweaning fondness for Morse and Griffin and all that may be called Andover' was mentioned to me. I think I have the expressions. Now if I thought you could tell of this, I should be afraid to write you again. But I believe many thought that your Dictionary would be tinged with the '*peculiar doctrines*,' as Doctor Morse entitled your letter in the Panoplist. They thought your own sentiments would get into the work, as the true and only definition, as Johnson defined excise from his own politics, and *Oats* as bread for Scotsmen. I have now hinted only my suspicions of the cause of your disappointment about the help in these parts. I think there was another. Many men are loth to advance money for a book to be finished 12 years hence, when the author may be impaired or in his grave; tho' such men will not confess such motives; being unwilling to be thought niggardly. Another circumstance, I believe, diverted those who intended to subscribe only from charitable motives. I mean the circulation of a story that you was so very dear to the Andoverians, you would certainly be one of their professors. I confess I myself expected it. And my family anticipated much delight from the visits we were dreaming of, to see *your* family at Andover. And why they did not elect you, considering your opinions together with your erudition and capacity of Instruction I never knew.

Should you be obliged to take a farm, how would it answer to come into some place within a dozen miles of Boston, and take young lads to board and fit them for Harvard College and even set up a little Academy? I think you would have applicants. When a man's heart is hard he is not sensible of it. This may be *my* case. But, I feel as tho' I commiserated you and your lovely mate and young ones and would do anything in my power for any of you. And *I know*, as well as believe, that my wife is very

much affected with such parts of your letter as I read to her. Farewell for the present,

Yours affectionately,

In his financial anxieties Webster, as we learn from this and later letters, was leaving no stone unturned, and Judge Dawes' mention of the project of a farm explains the later removal of the Webster family from New Haven.[1]

[1] The following were offered to Webster by a foreign collector at bargain prices. That he was in no mood for speculation explains his endorsement: 'An imposition! What have I to do with such things!'

CATALOGUE

OF A

STOCK TO SUPPLY A

Museum or Gallery of Fine Arts. In any city of the United States, the Spanish Main, Brazil, Canada, &c.

1 Large piece of superfine Gobelin's manufactory Tapestry, mostly in silk, of the largest size, representing the four quarters of the world, America, Europe, Asia, and Africa, paying homage to Jupiter, in a beautiful landscape, length 20 feet by 14 high.
1 do. representing a Seaport in Sicily, with Sea Birds, &c. and Landscape, 15 by 12.
1 do. Calypso receiving the Presents sent by Ulysses, in a Landscape, 11 by 12.
A small Landscape, Aubusson, 9 by 5.
A long piece of fine Landscape and Woods, with Partridges, 15 by 7.
1 do. Circe Metamorphosing the Companions of Ulysses in her palace, 11 by 12.
1 do. Semele admitting Jupiter amongst her attendants, in a Garden, 15 by 11. * * *

Prints under Frames and Glasses, and other articles of curiosity.

Apollo of the Belvedere, from the Statue reputed to be the finest in the world.

The publication of his first and smaller Dictionary had been a venture, for the book had to create its own demand. In thus first arousing an appetite destined within certain limits to grow by what it fed on, he indubitably did a far-reaching service to his compatriots 'unto the third and fourth generation.' To this day the average American studies or consults

Venus de Medicis, equally renowned in Europe.
2 large Views of Philadelphia and New-York, Seaports coloured.
A remarkable Likeness of our Saviour, according to the description given of him by the Roman Prefect, then in Jerusalem. * * *

Observations.

A Museum, or a Gallery of Fine Arts, is a valuable property, and has succeeded wherever it has been established, as at Philadelphia, New-York, Boston, &c. It could be kept at a small expense. by a man who may, besides, be employed in some other occupation, as a watchmaker, an engraver, &c. &c.

The revenue is considerable, and the stock yearly increases by the voluntary gifts of liberal travellers and navigators, who often present these useful institutions with precious objects of natural history, and other articles.

The rooms may be rented, besides, to great advantage, for entertainments, balls, assemblies, &c, at night, by having sliding partitions.

Such useful establishments will always experience encouragement from the state legislatures, and all wise governments, by donations of land, grants of lotteries, or special privileges, so that the undertaker will obtain a large interest for his capital without any risk, by getting the building and its contents insured against fire or other accidents.

MS. note.

N.B. the above mentioned articles may be seen Everyday in the Week from 10 °Clock a m to 12. and from 4. to 6 in the afternoon *N° 96 So: 3^d S^t opposite S^t Paul's church* Philad^a.— *Gratis* but only for those who really intends to become purchasers ; the owner of the Stock Wishing to preserve to them all the advantages of the Exhibition. [W. MSS.]

a dictionary far more than his transatlantic kin.[1]

This custom was early adopted, as is shown by Dr. Mitchill, who had written to Webster, New York, June 19th, 1807 [W. MSS.]. * * * 'As for your Dictionary, I keep it on my Table, and use it as the constant book of reference for the spelling and definition of Words.'

From JOHN MURRAY.[2] W. MSS.

New York, 6th month, 1811.

RESPECTED FRIEND.

The Board of Commissioners appointed by the authority of this State, to report a system for the organisation and establishment of common schools, and the distribution of the interest of the school fund among the common schools of this State are desirous of availing themselves of information appertaining to their duty from

[1] 'If one has moved in good English society, one has no need ever to ask how a word is pronounced, far less to go to the dictionary; one pronounces it as one has always heard it pronounced. The sense of this gives the American a sort of despair, like that of a German or French speaking foreigner, who perceives that he never will be able to speak English. The American is rather worse off, for he has to subdue an inward rebellion, and to form even the wish to pronounce some English words as the English do. He has for example, always said "financier" with the accent on the last syllable; and if he has consulted his Webster he has found that there was no choice for him. Then, when he hears it pronounced at Oxford by the head of a college with the accent on the second syllable, and learns on asking that it is never otherwise accented in England, his head whirls a little, and he has a sick moment, in which he thinks he had better let the verb "to be" govern the accusative as the English do, and be done with it, or else telegraph for his passage home at once. Or stop! He must not "telegraph," he must "wire".' *Seven English Cities*, William Dean Howells, p. 177.

[2] Father of Lindley Murray.

every quarter. Impressed with the importance of the subject assigned them it being nothing less, than to provide the easiest, cheapest and most efficacious mode of instructing youth, by the establishment and promotion of a proper number of well regulated schools, in every county of the State, they take the liberty of addressing thee on the subject, in full confidence that as thy mind has long been devoted to literary pursuits, and to the subject of education, thou wilt readily contribute thy efforts toward promoting the object contemplated by the Legislature of this State. With this impression the Commissioners desiring that thou wilt furnish them with an account in detail of the mode adopted in the State of Connecticut, for the establishment and support of common schools. They wish to be informed what alterations, also, have been made in the original plan; and of what improvements the present system is susceptible. Thy long residence in Connecticut and thy peculiar turn of mind, and great application have afforded thee an opportunity of making thyself complete master of this subject. And as it is commendable on all occasions, to profit by the experience of others, and to consult the judgments and observations of men of understanding, the Commissioners cannot but be very solicitous that thou wilt favor them, as soon as convenient with all the information of which thou art possessed, and which thou mayst be able to collect, on the subject assigned to them by the Legislature of the State.

By order of the Board.

ROBERT MACOMB Sec.

Endorsed: This was answered and the facts made the basis of the Law of New York on the subject. See Report of Commissioners, New York Spectator, March 11th 1812.

Webster's reply, after stating the substance of the laws in Connecticut, suggested additional

provisions which were incorporated into the New York law. The laws of Connecticut had been in operation ten or twelve years, and, besides the new provisions suggested by Webster, there were others added by the Commissioners, adapted to the particular circumstances of New York.

From JONAS PLATT.[1] W. MSS.

Albany 16 October 1811

DEAR SIR.

This will be handed to you by my Son, who goes to New Haven to become a Member of Yale.

[1] To JONAS PLATT. Lib. C.

New Haven Sept. 27. 1807.

DEAR SIR,

By our friend M^rs. Colt, I have had the pleasure to hear of you & your welfare. It is a pleasure to me that I live in your remembrance, as my friendship & respect for you, contracted early in life, have suffered no abatement.

On politics I shall say little, for I can say nothing with satisfaction, except that Connecticut still buffets the storm with an unshaken front.

The enclosed papers will show you what I am doing. In philology I have made some progress & many discoveries that throw light on language & history. I feel able to say with confidence, that I have penetrated into this branch of literature beyond any European, & as I pursue my researches with pleasure, it is probable I may yet do something honorable to my country. I have many prejudices to encounter, not so much from personal ill will, tho there may be something of that, but from the utter ignorance of men of letters in our country, respecting the *amount* & *utility* of my improvements. Of these they cannot judge at present, and I expect to derive little aid from all the superabundance of wealth which is visible in every part of our prosperous country. But if men of letters, not wealthy, will give me their influence in spreading the school books which I have published, I shall be able to accomplish my views.

I am, Sir, with great esteem

Your Obed. Ser^t

He will ask admission as freshman; in which grade I hope his proficiency will entitle him to rank with credit.

Permit me Sir to request you to be his guardian and banker. Presuming that you will not refuse to your old friend and pupil, that favor I enclose $75 for the requisite advances for my son; and have requested my friend M^r. Dudley Walsh, who takes charge of him to N. Haven, to supply any deficiency.

My predilection is in favor of lodging him in College, if possible; not merely because he may be under the immediate care and inspection of the officers of the College; but because I think the regimen and restraint of appetite in College-Commons, are a useful part of education.

I wish my son to live *as well* and *no better* than the generality of reputable boys of his class; and as to pocket Money, he must always have a few shillings; but the less he spends the better. His habits in this respect, I know are good: and I fondly hope that by your friendly admonition he will be preserved from vice and profligacy. I have directed him to apply to You Sir, as his wants occur; and submit the question of Money entirely to your discretion.

Be so obliging as to advise me of the state of his funds; and I shall take timely measures to anticipate your advances for him.

With gratitude and respect,

D^r Sir, Your friend and obed^t. Serv^t.

In 1811 a meeting was held at New Haven on the commercial policy of Madison's Administration, and a paper was drawn up by Webster and his neighbors, dated May 1st, which was printed in the form of a circular letter, and sent to the principal cities and towns of Connecticut, accompanied by a draft of fifteen Resolutions. These were also drawn up by Webster and published in the *Connecticut Herald*, May 7th.

This movement was directed against the Non-Importation Act by which the Administration hoped to alter Great Britain's arrogant attitude toward the United States. American vessels were being seized by the English and their seamen impressed, while Great Britain announced that this nation might only trade with France as a *neutral* on condition that every vessel so trading should first enter some British port, *pay a transit duty* and *take out a license.*

This country was between the devil and the deep sea, for France had also been most high-handed; and it was feared that in exasperating England by the Non-Importation Act, we should make of her an overt enemy, as well as actually weaken her ability to make front against Napoleon. The New Haven patriots wrote as vehemently in favor of vindicating 'our rights against the aggressions of Great Britain as against the wrongs and insults of France.'

From ABRAHAM WEBSTER. W. MSS.

Lebanon June 1st. 1812

DEAR BROTHER

Mr Hubbard has been so polite as to offer to carry this letter to you, and to bring one in return if you wish to write. I and my little family have enjoyed pretty Good health since I saw you and nothing very metirial has occured since that time. I feel (however) that I am tumbling down hill, and every spring I can perceive that I have failed since the last my wife also is complaining of the infirmities of age, her domestic cares and labour are a burden to her, more than they formerly were, and since this is the case that our lives are on the decline and will soon

be finished I think it would be acting wisely to spend the remainder of our days in the service of God and for his Glory more than we have hitherto done. When I reflect on my tour to Connecticut last fall I experience a degree of pleasure and of pain, pleasure at the recollection of seeing my Brothers and Sisters in circumstances of health and comfort and pain at leaving my Honourd Father in such an unsafe State, two persons aged and infirm as they are ought not to live by themselves, how to remedy the evil I do not know—when Seymour was there last winter he p[e]rsisted in his former resolution to come and live with me, this I should be Glad to have him do but I dare not be the means of parting him from his wife. You will have the Goodness to write by M^r^ Hubbard (if you get this before he l[e]aves N Haven) and let me hear what you know from W Hartford.

be pleased to accept the Love and affection of myself and wife to you and each of your family

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston 25^th^ June 1812

MY DEAR BROTHER.

Your valuable political letter I rec^d^ yesterday morn^g^; and after looking all over it as the mirror of my own impressions, I read it, and *had* it read, to many leaders of our commercial and political friends, at the Insurance offices and on 'Change, who had been assembled in groupes to reciprocrate their sentiments of horror at the declaration of War. No letter ever came more opportunely. Misery loves company. We were comforted that people in New Haven, and such as yourself, felt like ourselves. I sent the letter to Gov^r^ Strong, who, I believe, read it at the Council board. Last evening there was a convention of federal members of our house of representatives, whose committees reported this day an address to be sent to the Towns. Nat & Charles Appleton, who are sojourn^g^ with us, told me at

dinner time, this day, that they had attended the animated debates upon that noble State paper, and that 4 P M (whilst I am writing) the proposed addressed [*sic*] will be accepted 2 to 1—

We are not asleep tho' wounded. We most fully and cordially realize your apprehensions. For myself, I have preached such doctrines in Faneuil Hall, in Caucusses and Town meetings, 'till I have become obnoxious to democrats. There is but one way *left* to save us from the yoke of Bonaparte and Virginia, the *rising of the New England people.*

I mean nothing illegal or unconstitutional; I do not mean a Whiskey rebellion or anything like it. *You* know what I mean. And, tho' *late*, I think with you, it is not *too* late. I should be glad to know whether M^r^ Hillhouse and *such* are of your opinion. Let us animate each other, and work while the day lasts.

* * * I rejoice at the prospects of your Emily and Julia[1]— '*I knows all about it*' As to my own family, the war kills many of us. Eliot and wife & 3 babes passed a fortnight with us. *He* relies upon some connection with Ed & Tom Pope who have 2 ships loaded and were ready for sea when Embargo came. I fear they are ruined. My son Tom was quite successful at Naples, and was to have an establishment at Malta very promising; but the War, if continued, will nip the buddings. My son & daughter Goddard are [with] me, He is poor enough. He was in his way to Majorca from Tunis, with good expectations after a year's trouble.

[1] The eldest child, Emily Scholten, had become engaged to William Wolcott Ellsworth, son of Webster's old friend, Oliver Ellsworth. He became Governor of Connecticut, Judge of its Supreme Court and Congressman.

The second child, Frances Juliana, had been betrothed to Rev. Chauncey Allen Goodrich, son of another early friend, Elizur Goodrich. He became Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature at Yale College, 1839-60, and assisted in making two revisions of Webster's *Dictionary*.

When in sight of Majorca, tempest drove him back to Minorca where he was ship wrecked and all was lost! and the ship that carried his order for Malta for insurance never arrived! But 'a living dog is better than a dead lyon.' I expect my son James home hourly; his masters having failed at Rio Janeiro, and one of them being in prison! Notwithstandg all I have described, I have double my share of blessings

Love to Becca and tribe—

From the Same. W. MSS.

Boston, 24 July 1812.

Dear Brother:

I have omitted longer than I intended to answer your last favor inclosing a valuable manuscript. I submitted the manuscript to the inspection of some Federalists of the first water, and tho' they were unanimous in praising the greater part of it, yet they tho't there were some observations about the British which rendered it impolitic to publish the work, at this period of uncommon excitement. Our Federalists here do not think it expedient to express much about injuries from the Brittish. We do not like to mention both belligerents in the same breath. If Saul has slain his thousands, David has slain his Ten thousands. I beg pardon of David for abusing his name, I only mean that the French are ten times worse than the English. I heard one of our best statesmen regret that your Govr Griswold had admitted so much against the English and that his admission was calculated to do more harm than the best pamphlet could do good.

We have a number of first rate pamphlets now in circulation—one entitled 'Mr Madison's War,' a Mr. Webster's [1] Oration to the Washington society in Portsmouth, another

[1] Daniel Webster, then a young lawyer in Portsmouth, who delivered this oration, July 4, 1812.—[Ed.]

of Francis Blake,[1] a sermon of Doctor Osgood, the Address of the minority in Congress and of the Massachusetts house of Representatives, and yesterday, fast day, I suppose has produced as many Rams horns as in old time would have blown down Jericho.

I could get no Printer to pay anything for the copy right of any Essay upon the subjects of the day. The One called 'Mr Madison's War' was subscribed for by gentlemen some of whom took a hundred, each, for circulation. But those gentlemen do not think that it ought to be in the mouths of *us* to criminate *Britain*, *us* who have been *aggressive* in many partialities and antipathies. They think that the errors of England, *tho' errors*, are fewer than any other nation, (our most noble selves not excepted) under similar circumstances, would have committed.

Ever yours.

My son Tom has arrived from Algiers, James from Rio Janeiro & Harry from Baltimore All 6 are now at home The 6 girls as when I wrote last. Love to Becca & tribe.

From Thomas Dawes. W. MSS.

Boston April 21st. 1813

* * * I went last Thursday to New Bedford and returned on Saturday. Brother Pope is inconsolable at his giving over all that he has. Considering his age and infirmities, I do not wonder at it: tho' sister Pope, in her usual spirit, which is to be admired, tells him that there are worse evils than poverty and to be thankful that conscience is unimpeached. My Margarett is gaining strength; tho' she has had some relapses from going out too soon—(miscarriages are miserable)

[1] Blake's oration was delivered at Worcester, July 4. Osgood's Sermon: *Solemn Protest against the late Declaration of War.* —[Ed.]

We are in good health here: and our spirits are not bad, tho' we begin to have our portion of sufferings from the times. This morning my Wharf-Tenant gave up my wharf which has always rented for $700 per ann. and I have no hopes of any successor. There is nothing on it, tho' heretofore loaded with commodities and nothing at it, tho' heretofore surrounded with sloops and schooners. Thanks to Madison. The two Baltimore families are to come in June and pass the Summer in or near Boston: except Wm. Appleton and my 2 boys who are to remain there and to nibble if they catch no fish. I wish very much to come pouncing upon you some evening when least expected: but about this I cannot prophesy. My wife begs to be remembered to her sister Webster and children and so does

Your brother DAWES.

DIARY.

1807.

January 1. 1807.

Very cold this morning—Mercury at 3° below Cypher at Sunrise—Two or three weeks of good sleying, then no more snow of consequence, & this dissolved before the great rain.

On Saturday 31st of January, a great rain. The severe frost of 3 weeks had made very thick ice in the rivers, & the ground. The rain was sudden, the ground hard, no snow to detain it, & the whole being poured into the rivers, broke up the ice, & swelling beyond the banks all the streams, swept away most of the bridges in the State of Connecticut, especially on the large streams.

On Saturday, Feby 14. a still greater rain, after severe frost had again made thick ice, & the few bridges which remained were swept away, with many mill-dams & mills.

On the last of February, a third flood nearly as great as the first, from rain & melted snow.

In March a considerable Snow, the month unusually Cold.

On the 31st March, a violent gale from the east with snow, hail & rain. Then for the first time I saw a *common tide* in the harbor at *low water*, that is, the violence of the wind kept the water from ebbing—time of low water, a little before noon; at three oclock, the tide was as high as ever known, then the wind having abated, the ebb began at half flood; no moderate weather & no peas planted till about April 6 or 7th.

April & May cold. Apple trees not in blossom till May 20th.

Cut my first Asparagus May. 2d.

Several earthquakes in March & April. One at Richmond April. 30. One in Maine some time before, & in Canada Great snows in the interior country; the first week in April snow three feet deep on a level in the western counties of New York, and at Marietta much snow; the Ohio froze a month so as to bear loaded carriages. High flood in the Connecticut for two or three weeks in April & May.

May & June, wet & cold; with the exception of three or four days of great heat—8th & 9th & 10th of June—the month remarkably cool. On Monday, June 22d cut the grass in my garden. Wednesday a cold N E rain, & thursday I was obliged for comfort to make a fire in my study.

July & August, warm, but extremely wet; continual rains & damp southerly wind, in short the wetest season known by the present generation; in most of New England, grain short & got in in a bad state—as is grass.

A severe earthquake at Lisbon &c June 6, at change of the moon. Influenza epidemic in August over the northern States.

Sept. 25. or about that time appeared a Comet in the west—about 30 or 35 degrees from the sun. It was of the bearded kind, the beard extending a few degrees. It disappeared in November. Some cold weather the latter part of November, then moderate through December. Snow very little in Connecticut. Saturday, Decr. 5. a violent gale from the east & a very high tide.

Monday morning December 14th a meteor fell or burst, & large masses of stony substances fell in Fairfield County.

DIARY.

1808.

Winter generally mild; little ice; navigation in N Haven harbor not obstructed. Weather variable, alternate frost, snow & rain.

April pleasant; first week in May warm, then very wet & cold till June 22. The falls of rain extraordinary; a flood in June, that did injury to crops on the meadows on Connecticut. We sat by a fire June 20 & 21. Then commenced hot weather.

July very rainy, with an almost constant southeasterly wind —a humid atmosphere, when it did not rain. Farmers put to great difficulty to make their hay, & the grain somewhat injured.

The petechial fever prevailed in Farmington, Bristol, Canton & some adjoining towns, also in Wethersfield, from early in the Spring to midsummer, but the country in general healthy.

Early frost Sept 21. but nothing remarkable in the Autumn. December rather colder than last year, but no snow in New Haven. Near the last of the month, snow in the country, and a light fall in N Haven.

On May 1. 1808. a great eruption of fire, or Volcano, on St Georges, one of the Azores, which continued till June, sweeping away the town of Ursulina, & greatly destroying improvements. Connect Herald Feb^{y}. 28. 1809. Letter from M^{r} Daubney. American Counsel [Consul].

DIARY.

1809–1811.

January 1809. First week, cold, but no snow at New Haven. The cold continued without much abatement through January, till the last week in February. Harbor at New Haven closed a few weeks; the snow in January & Feb^{y}. fell to the depth of two feet nearly in New Haven, & in the country, three or four feet. A severe winter, but not of the first degree. The harbor of N Haven was closed to Black rock for some time, & about the pier & wharf 8 or 10 weeks; it was not wholly clear of ice till March 22.

The Spring Cold & late. Martins first appeared May 5. & that day I cut my first asparagus. Appletrees in blossom about the 20 to 25.

May 25. about 10. o clock in the Morning a slight shock of earth quake was felt at New Haven, attended with a rumbling sound. I did not feel it, as I was on the water, just entering the harbor on my return from New York.

June & July, as well as May wet & cool; a few warm days excepted. In July, two long N E rains—the last 17. 18 & 19th, & this day. the 19th. I am writing by a fire. I do not recollect such a July. August also wet & cool. At Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, I sat by the fire at the Rev^{d} M^{r} Buckminsters August 26—On the 27. great rain, then the rain ceased, & six weeks of dry weather succeeded; the beginning of October was warmer than August.

March 26. a great eruption of Mount Etna, as the papers inform us. Spectator Feb. 21. 1810—Spect. Oct 1809. Latter part of August & beginning of September, great eruptions of Vesuvious. Spectator. Nov. 4. 1809.

Nov^{r} 20. the first snow at New Haven, two or three inches, but not cold.

21. More snow

24. A violent Snow Storm, & about a foot of Snow.

In December, a violent storm of Snow, & extremely cold; then moderate weather with repeated rains & fogs, till Jan^{y} 18th. A D. 1810, when the wind suddenly sprung up from the N West, with a squall of snow, followed by extreme cold through Friday 19th. Saturday & Sunday following. The mercury in Farenheit fell in New Haven to 7°. below zero, & the harbor closed to Morris' Cove below the fort, & continued covered with Ice till Feb^{y}. 20. A cold month. A slight earthquake in Virginia on the evening of Saturday, Jany. 19th. (& another in Vermont, as I have heard). Changes of wind have been surprizingly great & rapid. No snow since December, in this State & generally east of the Hudson, but in the beginning of February a great snow, of a foot depth, fell in Pennsylvania, Maryland & Virginia.

May has been a very dry month—& the beginning of the month cold.

Cut my Asparagus first. April 23.

Picked my first peas June 9th.

June 5th. received a visit from my father, now 88 years of age.

June 8th. a violent tempest at N East with abundant rain.

European accounts state that in Hungary, between January 14 & Feb^{y} 14, there were 1000 shocks of Earth quake. This was the time of the great change of

weather in America. About the same time there was an earthquake at the Cape of Good Hope.

July & August were mostly very rainy, hot & moist, with Southerly winds.

September less rainy, but a long Equinoctial storm.

My daughter Harriet was siezed with a bilious fever the beginning of August, & confined about 4 weeks, & did not go to Church in 8 weeks. But a merciful God preserved her.[1]

Oct. 31. a light snow at night.

Nov^{r} 2. A snow storm at N E. the snow fell the preceding night & all day—about a foot in depth—but the ground not froze. I have never known such a snow-storm & such severe cold, so early by a fortnight. & I am now 52 years old.

A few weeks ago, there were two eruptions of fire of the Volcanic kind in Stafford, Connecticut.

The snow soon disvolved, & the middle of the month was moderate with great rains, violent wind & high tides. Such a tide in Raritan River never before known. The lower rooms of the houses on its borders, in New Brunswick, were half filled.

At the close of this great Rain, after 8 days rain or cloudy weather, a considerable earth quake was felt in Massachusetts from Charlestown to Portland—at least. This was on Friday night the 16th. at 9 o clock.

On the 10th of September Vesuvius began to throw out fire & lava, & an astonishing eruption succeeded for several days. Courant. March. 1811.

Great storms this autumn & immense losses at sea—

[1] See Appendix XXVIII. below.

CHAPTER XIII

REMOVAL TO AMHERST

Amidst so many distractions, civic, social and political, Webster could not push his main work as he desired. Moreover, his large family meant ever-increasing expense, while his earning capacity was greatly hindered by his devotion to the compiling of his larger *Dictionary*.

It was deemed expedient to remove to a smaller and simpler locality, and after making inquiries Amherst was chosen, whither he removed in September, 1812.[1]

To Josiah Quincy. W. MSS.

(Copy.) New Haven, Feb^{y} 12th. 1811

Dear Sir

The note at the bottom of my letter to M^{r} Moreley addressed to you indicates very little feeling indeed—too little to excite your apprehensions. My name has been so much band[i]ed about that I am quite willing it should be seen & heard no more at present. This privilege I cannot enjoy & therefore feel no uneasiness at what cannot be prevented. If I should have the pleasure of meeting you, I am persuaded you will think my respect & esteem for you

[1] See Diary for July 2nd, 1812, below.

are not abated, & that what I wrote contains more of good nature than anger.

I am engaged in a work which gives me great pleasure; & the tracing of language through more than twenty different dialects has opened a new & before unexplored field.[1] I have within two years past, made discoveries which if ever published must interest the literati of all Europe, & render it necessary to revise all the lexicons, Hebrew, Greek, & Latin, now used as Classical Books. But what can I do? My own resources are almost exhausted & in a few days I shall sell my house to get bread for my children. All the assurances of aid which I had rec[d] in Boston, N York &c have failed & I am soon to retire to a humble cottage in the country. To add to my perplexity the political measures pursuing render it almost impossible to sell property, or to obtain money upon the best security. A few thousand dollars, for which I can give security, would place me in a condition in the country to live with comfort, and pursue my studies—but even this cannot be obtained, till the measures of Congress assume a more auspicious aspect!

Adieu, Dear Sir,—The Little Band will no doubt do their duty, but what can be done against the Army of Huzzas!

Alexander Wolcott!![2]

We must drink the cup of disgrace to the dregs!

Yours in low spirits.

Amherst at this time was a small farming town about eight miles from Northampton, the

[1] Here it will be seen he at once avows his belief in the common origin of all language.

[2] Alexander Wolcott, born 1778 in Windsor, Conn. [a cousin of Oliver], strongly anti-federalist; was made collector of the Port of Middletown in 1801 by Jefferson, an office which he retained through life, and in which he was succeeded by his son. See *Yale Biographies*, Franklin Bowditch Dexter, p. 81.—[Ed.]

county seat. Northampton had drawn to itself a number of wealthy and educated people. The fat river lands of Hadley and Hatfield (which raised brown corn and tobacco, and other crops exhausting to the rich soil, which is fertilised each year by the spring freshets of the Connecticut, but which bring the autumnal fevers in their flow) had been taken possession of by a set of well-to-do agriculturists. But the hills of Amherst sustained a plain, moral, thrifty set of farmers, rather looked down upon by their wealthy neighbors of Hadley and Hatfield, and by the more educated society of the shire town of Northampton. But they proved their moral worth and intellectual foresight a few years after Webster's settlement among them by organizing and supporting Amherst College, which was founded as a 'Charitable Institution in the interests of philanthropy and religion.'

'Dr. Dwight had visited Amherst in 1803, ascended the tower of the church, then standing on the site of the Wood's Observatory and Cabinet, and was greatly struck with the beauty and picturesqueness of the scenery which have been admired and loved by many generations of College students. The position, he says, is a very eligible one, commanding a great multitude of the fine objects, which are visible from the summit of Mount Holyoke. This amphitheatre is about 24 miles in length, and about 15 in breadth. The mountains by which it is encircled and the varieties of scenery by which

its area is filled up, form one of the most impressive and delightful objects which can be seen in this country. * * * A handsomer piece of ground (than the township of Amherst) composed of hills and valleys, is rarely seen, more elegant slopes never. The lines by which they are limited, are formed by an exquisite hand, and with an ease and grace which cannot be surpassed.'[1]

Perhaps another attraction besides the beauty and wholesomeness of the place, and the friendship of Dr. David Parsons, the clergyman, was found in the fact that Amherst had been for years a precinct of Hadley, where John Webster, the immigrant, had helped to plant a colony. Hampshire County was the mother county of western Massachusetts; it was the central county of the State, and Amherst was the central town.

Dr. Dwight in his travels says: 'No county in the state has uniformly discovered so firm an adherence to order, and good government, or a higher regard to learning, morals and religion.' As a body, the people possess 'that middle state of property, which so long and so often has been termed golden. * * * Few are poor, and few are rich. * * * Almost all the inhabitants of this county are independent, in this high sense; that they live in houses, and on lands, which are their own, and which they hold in fee simple. * * * Since these journeys were made, this noble country, after having

[1] Reference unknown.—[Ed.]

existed as a fine Doric column of industry, good order, morals, learning and religion, in Massachusetts for more than a century was by an unwise legislature broken into three parts.'[1]

It will be seen that in removing from the seaboard of Connecticut to the hills and forests of Massachusetts, Webster did not enter a 'wilderness,' but a community which was one of the leading forces of the State in politics, education and religion, and later testimony in regard to the county of Hampshire and town of Amherst will farther sustain its reputation. At Boston, during the Revolutionary War, Christopher Gore used to ask: 'What will the river Gods do?' meaning the settlements along the beautiful valley of the Connecticut. And this large county before its division, took a leading part in the early civil, political and religious history of the commonwealth of Massachusetts.

At this time, however, the town was still small with but two long streets, running one, north and south, the other east and west, with a large common in the center of the village, and about twenty-five small houses, with three or four larger houses of 'gambrel-roof' architecture—one for the minister and, later, one for the president. This composed the main settlement, besides the residences of farmers away from the centre.

[1] *Travels in New England and New York*, Timothy Dwight, p. 260.

The common was a swamp of white birch and pasture land where each family, by the vote of the town, was allowed to pasture a cow for so many weeks every season, somewhat after the custom of the Russian *Mir*. Mt. Pleasant Hill was an unbroken forest of chestnuts and walnuts, and the village lads and the squirrels alike enjoyed what Rufus Choate called 'this jewel on the brow of Amherst.' There was a lovely grove where now Mr. Sweetser's and Professor Tyler's houses stand,[1] thick and unbroken, and full of spring beauties—princes pine and checkerberries, which was called Lovers' Walk. Sidewalks and paving stones were quite unknown.

It has been said, and with a good deal of truth, that women are like cats, having strong attachments to places. It is certain that home and locality have far stronger hold upon them than upon men; but Mrs. Webster, though domestic in the highest degree, never murmured at the repeated changes in her life, nor at the frequent removal and resettlement of her household Gods. Indeed her high spirits, her talent for affairs, her thorough and comfortable housekeeping all cheered and sustained her husband in his laborious and absorbed life.

My aunt Mrs. Jones wrote: 'My father removed to Amherst when I was very young. I remember the parting with some much loved

[1] Written between 1885 and 1892.—[Ed.]

companions, but nothing of the leaving of the old Arnold house. But in passing through the wild woods of Hadley in a stage or carriage, my older sisters wept. They realised the great change coming.'

Emily and Julia Webster left a most delightful circle and their betrothed lovers behind (with one of their prospective families), yet their letters show no repining at the change, nor quarreling with the simpler life before them.

'In respect to your conjectures why Amherst was chosen as the residence of Father—whether through the influence of Judge Williams or the Rev. Mr. Parsons. I can only say, he knew those gentlemen well. Mr. Parsons was the pastor of the East parish of Amherst at the time we went there to live, if my memory is true, as in my earliest years there his daughter Harriet was my associate and playmate constantly. My impression is that Father visited the region sometime before he fixed upon it as a place of retirement. The flitting from our New Haven home I do not remember, but I have vivid recollections of stopping in Hartford at a small Hotel, the first night of our journey, and of my Father going with my older sisters to see the new church of D^r^ Strong, then in process of building, and well I remember my delight and my brother William's, as our stage coach rolled slowly through the South Hadley woods—then a long stretch where the boughs almost met overhead and we children could

reach them as we went along. It was all new to us, but Emily and Julia felt as if going into a wilderness and our gaiety almost annoyed them.

'My parents had been very happy in New Haven and had a large circle of congenial friends. Father worked assiduously but with many interruptions. His large family of seven children were growing up about him. He was very hospitable, and his expenses grew more rapidly than his income. He knew that he must live more quietly and at less expense, if he ever were to accomplish the purpose of his life.

'He found a large double house half finished on a gentle eminence opposite the "green" in the picturesque town of Amherst. He purchased and finished it. There were ten acres of meadow land about it, which he greatly improved. I think it was the convenience of the house and its pleasant situation which decided him to take Amherst as his abiding place. But not this alone. There were some men of education there and the pastor of the "decent church, which topped the neighboring hill," good old Dr. Parsons, and his stately wife, the sister of Chief Justice Williams, were congenial friends. When once accustomed to the quiet of the village life, the family were very happy there. The daughters of the Parsonage and my sisters used to read together the best books of English literature, and for amusement in the long winter evenings would

act the simple plays of Hannah More and others.[1]

[1] From conversations with Mrs. David Mack (*née* Harriet Parsons) the even tenor of the village life has been gathered. She said that her father's large family of well-grown boys and girls, full of animal spirits, fell into great intimacy with the lovely, playful, ladylike girls that became their neighbors. She spoke of her big brothers as strong, and even turbulent as boys—a frequent trait of the boyhood of noble, forceful men—as hearty, hungry and mischievous.

She gave the compiler a lovely Breton veil of her own work, which she said that Emily Webster and she had wrought together with linen thread when the foundation net was five dollars a yard. It is now about 75 years old and in perfect preservation. She told of Mrs. Webster's fine provident housekeeping that sometimes helped out her less fortunate neighbors. One Friday evening, after all the 'Parson's flock' had had their supper, three clergymen came riding over the hills for entertainment at the ministers. The last crumbs of the loaf were gone, and there could be little beside mush and milk improvised until the next day's baking in the big oven. Dr. Parsons in his cordial, majestic way, without alluding to the empty larder, invited his three guests to make a call upon his learned neighbor, Mr. Webster. He marshalled them across the green and were met by the elegant little housemother, who was quickly apprised of the situation. There could be nothing *baked*, by the old fashioned fireplace, and even a well burning fire and coals were necessary to the use of the Dutch oven, so that improvisation of a roast for the hungry men was quite impossible. What was his satisfaction when Mrs. Webster said: 'Dr. Parsons, I am all ready for them. My daughters and I baked in the big oven to-day.' And they were soon led to a board where roast ham and chickens, baked beans and bread, and pies of all sorts, showed the provisions made for the three or four days before the big oven was to be filled again. This thorough and generous housekeeping was most characteristic of the family. Dr. Parsons said: 'Mrs. Webster was never taken unawares.'

* * * * * * * *

'Certainly let the board be spread, and let the bed be dressed for the traveller; but let not the emphasis of hospitality lie in these things. Honor to the house, where they are simple to the verge of hardship, so that there interest is awake and reads the laws of the universe, the soul worships truth and love, honor and courtesy flow into all deeds.'—Emerson.

'I remember the kindly greetings of Mr. and Mrs. Wright Strong when we reached our home and their abounding hospitality. Mr. Strong was a lawyer and the son of Governor Strong of Massachusetts. There was another son, Simeon Strong, who lived in the old mansion of his Father, then dead, I think, as I do not remember him.[1] The house of the Governor was almost opposite the Academy and at that time was surrounded with grand old trees and ample grounds.'

'I remember every apartment in the Arnold and Amherst houses; every nook and corner, even the pig pen—where "Heliogabalus" grunted—and the white spots on the cows, "Gentle," "Comfort" and "Cricket," who roamed in the pasture. Father's horse was named "Rolla" by sister Mary, after reading a play or drama of the Conquest of Mexico. All our horses have been Rolla since. Ah, me! the old happy Amherst days, the Academy examinations with rows of minister-Trustees, with kindly faces before whom we stood and trembled twice each year. Porter, Whipple, Snell and Taylor, who used to stay at Father's and give us the benefit of their wit and their prayers. How they enjoyed Harriet's playfulness and admired her beauty. I remember speaking on the Academy platform. "So stood Elihu" from the "Botanic Garden" of Darwin, and on the platform of the Church, the part of the "Child of Nature" from a play I

[1] Governor Strong was deceased at this time.

have never seen since, and was dreadfully afraid I was wicked in doing it.[1] The Exhibitions of the "rival" Academies, Hadley and Amherst, were the great events of the year in those slow days.'[2]

At this time the high prices and scarcity due to the war of 1812 prevailed, and one entry of Webster's expense book is an item of $12 for home-made gingham—bought in Pelham, a town about six miles away—at a dollar a yard. Some woman had the art of weaving it very well, and dyeing it evenly. It was blue in ground with a red thread running through it.

Another family story is that once when Mrs. Webster was ill, the family physician left, among other medicines selected from his great pocket-book, half a dozen opium pills for sleeplessness, which she had no occasion to use. On a second visit, he came in chilled from his long rides over the bleak hills, and Mrs. Webster ordered a glass of cherry bounce to revive and warm him. Some attendant caught up a wine-glass which stood by the bedside, and carrying it to the little dark closet in the chimney behind the mantel, poured it full of the flavored brandy. He drank it down, thinking the little round substances in the bottom were cherry stones, and went home and slept two days and two nights, to the alarm of his family and the dismay of his patients, for he had taken *all* the opium pills, which had been deposited for safety in the wine-glass, and

[1] That is, in the church.—[Ed.]

[2] Reminiscences of Mrs. E. S. W. Jones.

which had been forgotten. The compiler has heard Mrs. Webster say that the pharmacopœia of the rural districts was of the simplest sort. Various herb teas, and, in great extremities, a 'little snake root and a little gum guiac' [?] were the chief remedies.

Mrs. Jones' Reminiscences further illustrate the life of the family thus suddenly transplanted. 'I remember the many doors of the old church, —three on each end and one in the middle on the South side facing the pulpit, which had a gilded sun, and rays as bright, suspended over it, looking as if it might fall and crush the venerable head of our pastor, Dr. Parsons, one of the most dignified of the old school of gentlemen, yet full of kindness to us children, who always bowed or curtesied when we met him in his short clothes, silk stockings and silver headed cane. The good Doctor liked to be entertained by the ladies of his parish, and Mother early sent for him and his wife to take tea with her, with a few friends. Well they came, and as in New Haven the custom then was to pass the tea and coffee &c on servers, so my Mother did, but the good Doctor had no lap. He was troubled and the delicacies did not suit him. Of this at the time my Mother was not aware, but by another season she had found out the custom of the place was to have an elaborate meat supper when the pastor was coming. So a fat turkey was ready and all things just right when lo, the minister's wife came, but not the minister himself. I recollect

how disappointed Mother was, and how in the course of the talk about it, Mrs. Parsons found out the preparations made by Mother to please him. So Mrs. Parsons called me to her side, and asked me to go up the hill to the Parsonage and tell the Doctor how disappointed Mother was and that she had: "set a table for him, and a hot supper was all ready." I set forth forming my sentences as I went, that I might be ready to say the right words when I came into the dignified presence. But the words were all forgotten when I stood before him in his study. When somehow I had explained the state of things: "Yes, yes," was the reply, "I will go with you. Wait a minute dear." So a fresh cravat was tied, his hair neatly brushed, and down the hill we went, hand in hand, I, exultant at my success, and he pleased too, and Mother's dimple was very attractive as she met us at the door, and never was a guest more entertaining than the good Doctor that afternoon. There were no late evening visits then; By the usual hour of family prayer, the guests would be gone, and the house arranged for morning duties. * * * Mother was remarkable for her hospitality. Her doors were open as wide as her heart, and ours was a home for the ministers who used to gather in Amherst after the Academy was in operation. Many of them I remember well, as they used to listen to us at our examinations at the close of the school sessions. Snell, Porter, Fiske, Whipple, Taylor; the best men in the wide world to me, who revered and loved each

one. They were men of great dignity of manner, but when together were full of life and innocent jesting, and seemed to me to be so happy because they were so good. They have all passed away to their rest. But their visits to my Amherst home did me good, and my blessed Mother never rebelled when Father told her of their coming.[1] If she sometimes was weary she was always glad also. Her ministrations were very quiet yet abundant, and her guests seemed greatly to enjoy being at her home. She was an excellent housekeeper and my Father a generous provider, and she presided over the affairs of the household with a gentle dignity which was lovely.

'Our new home on one side of the Amherst Green, as it was called, was a very pleasant home and my dear Father seemed to love it. He went there to lessen the expenses, and to live a more uninterrupted life, while pursuing his great work, the Dictionary. His habits were very regular. He rose early in the morning and went to his study, a room in front of the house filled with books, and the view from the front window commanded the hill on which now stand the Buildings of the College, which he helped to found. Then only the old Church stood there with doors on every side, and broad stone steps where I used to sit and watch the sun setting in glory as it nowhere else sets to

[1] 'The only brother of my mother who survived her, Daniel Greenleaf, of Quincy, Mass, wrote of her, "Sister Becky was always an angel on earth, she can only be one in heaven."' Mrs. E. S. W. Jones.

me now. The view was most enchanting. Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke and the Valley of the Connecticut by their base and Hadley and Northampton. The scene was inspiring and the thought of God as a *real* Father crept into my soul there always. I think Father went to his study for prayer as soon as he was dressed. In about half an hour he would pass the rooms of us children and say, 'Up, up, children!" We never lingered after that call like the youth of more modern days. We assembled for prayer in the common parlor, and Father read the Scriptures, and then from a little book of his own composing he offered prayer. That little book he gave to my eldest sister, Mrs. Ellsworth, at the Family Gathering, the year before he died.'

The house purchased stood at the east end of Phenix Row and was destroyed by fire in 1838. It was of good size as was necessary for the large family. Webster made a fine garden, and planted an orchard which was up to 1873, the best in town.' He grafted all the fine kinds of apples and pears he could procure, on sound native stocks, raised peaches and cherries from the stones, and brought a grape-vine of a peculiarly large and rich sort of native growth from his father's farm in West Hartford. These large sweet white grapes, from 'the Webster vine,' the compiler often ate in the garden of Mr. H. Wright Strong, when resident in Amherst, and in 1882 some of the apple trees planted by Webster still bore abundantly.

Indeed, to the end of his life his garden was a great delight and resource to him, and he cultivated fruits, vegetables and flowers with equal interest and success.

In the second story of his new home, in a large room, with windows looking to the south and east, Webster set up anew the large circular table which he had used for some years at New Haven. This table was about two feet wide, built in the form of a hollow circle. Dictionaries and grammars of all obtainable languages were laid in successive order upon its surface. Webster would take the word under investigation, and standing at the right end of the lexicographer's table, look it up in the first dictionary which lay at that end. He made a note, examined a grammar, considered some kindred word, and then passed to the next dictionary of some other tongue. He took each word through the twenty or thirty dictionaries, making notes of his discoveries, and passing around his table many times in the course of a day's labor of minute and careful study. This was comparative philology which has given such great results to modern philologists. Not in the study of the *roots* of language—few in number and to be most closely scrutinized—but it was the same method applied in a lesser and more general way to the whole English language.[1]

[1] 'Webster's fame arising out of the use of his name in the series of dictionaries that have perpetuated his original work is not necessarily any measure of the actual value of his work in developing the modern art and science of lexicography. It

It is pleasant to us to note that, amidst his disappointments and discouragements anent subscriptions for the *Dictionary*, Webster should have received the following letters from John Jay, showing that that distinguished man was as generous and urbane in his personal dealings, as he was upright and gifted in public affairs:

From JOHN JAY.[1] W. MSS.

(Copy.) Bedford, West Chester County, New York. 11 May, 1813.

SIR,

I have lately received a set of the Panoplist and in the fifth volume have found and for the *first* time read, an address from you to the Friends of Literature; and also a Prospectus of your new Dictionary, in which a subscription to that work is proposed.

I had *heard* of the proposed subscription but not of the circumstances and reasons which appear in the address.

Be pleased to inform me whether there is any person in the city of New York, whom you have authorised to receive such subscriptions.

I am Sir, your obedient Servant,

might have been that his work was of little importance relatively to that of his successors; but such is not the case. His book has been much bettered; but most of the general principles laid down by him for his own observance, still govern the making of our best and largest dictionaries.' *Noah Webster's Place among English Lexicographers*, F. Sturgis Allan, p. 1.

[1] I have a strong impression, although there is no definite record of the fact, that this letter and those under date of May 31 and June 9, 1813, of November 8, 1821, and June and December 1823, were lent to my mother to copy, by the late Mr. John Jay, grandson of the Hon. John Jay, about 1883. See p. 192 below.—[Ed.]

To JOHN JAY. W. MSS.

(Copy.) Amherst, Mass^tts. May 19. 1813.

SIR,

Your favor of 11th *Inst.* reached me last evening. You will perceive by the date of this, that I am no longer an inhabitant of New Haven, nor of Connecticut.

In answer to your inquiry, I would inform you that there are subscription papers for my Dictionary in New York, & one I believe, in the hands of Whiting and Watson, but no attempts have been made for nearly two years to procure names.

Finding my own resources would not be adequate to the support of my family, while I was engaged in the execution of the work, I made a serious effort to raise money by subscription, and an advance of part of the money. I visited New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Salem, Newburyport &c and laid before many principal literary Gentlemen, not only my proposals, but a specimen of the work. I every where received assurances of liberal support, but on trial no names were procured except a few in New York and New Haven. A year ago my means failing, an attempt was made in New Haven, by some particular friends, to unite a few gentlemen in an undertaking to advance me a sum of money in three years which, with my own means, would probably enable me to carry my purpose into effect, and in fact, one third of the sum was advanced. I sat down at my studies for the year, supposing the other two thirds would be furnished in the two following years. At the end of the year, last Spring, I was astonished to find that most of the Gentlemen did not expect to make any further advances and I was suddenly left without the means of subsistence. I had no alternative. I sold my house in New Haven at a loss, and purchased a house in Amherst whither I removed in September last. Here my expenses are less, and my family submit to new hardships, and a new mode of life with a

good degree of fortitude. The details of facts are too numerous to be recited. I hope to be able to support my family here without farther aid; but this is by no means certain. I shall pursue my design, if kind providence shall permit. But the disappointments I have experienced, lead me to place no dependence on my fellow citizens. Some few of my friends would do all in their power to encourage me, but literary men in the large towns appear to be opposed to *me* or my *design* and their pointed opposition has had no small effect in preventing me from receiving encouragement. If I live to finish my proposed work, it is probable, I shall go to England to revise and publish it, and as my own country furnishes no patron, I may find one in Great Britain. I am so well satisfied that my researches will open an unexplored field and throw more light on the origin and history of language than all that has before been written as well as lead to important illustrations of ancient History, sacred and profane, that I think it my duty to pursue the subject, unless absolutely compelled to relinquish it.

I thank you sir for the interest you kindly manifest in my success, and am,

With great respect,
Your obedient servant.

From JOHN JAY.[1] W. MSS.

(Copy.) Bedford, West Chester County, New York.
31 May, 1813.

SIR,

I rec'd by the last mail, your letter of the 19th inst. The circumstances mentioned in it, cannot be regarded with indifference by those who wish you well—and I feel as well as think so.

It is not improbable that doubts prevail respecting the design and tendency of the work you have on hand. The

[1] See note, p. 117 *ante*.

literary productions of Great Britain and America being interesting to each other, many are of opinion (and I concur in it) that the English language and its orthography should be the same in both countries.

Apprehensions have been entertained that your dictionary would tend to impair that sameness, and those apprehensions may to an uncertain degree, have had an unfavorable influence.

The progress of the subscription having been so long suspended, I think it better to enclose what I intended to subscribe than trouble your agents at New York with it.

If any plan to render your prospects more promising, and in my power to promote should be adopted, be pleased to communicate it to me.

I am, Sir,

To the Same. W. MSS.

(Copy.) Amherst, June 9th, 1813.

Sir:

For your favor of the 31st ult. with the enclosed bill be pleased to accept my most grateful acknowledgements. The interest you have manifested in my labors, and the liberality accompanying it, are the more acceptable as they have been unsolicited.

It is not improbable that some ill founded apprehensions that I might attempt changes of orthography have had their effect in preventing subscriptions, but there are several other causes, among which may be numbered differences of religious opinions, which have had an obvious influence on the minds of the Unitarians in and near Boston. The fact may appear surprising but I have certain evidence of it.

On the subject of orthography, gentlemen might have been easy, as any considerable changes must prevent the sale and use of a work of this sort, and they might naturally

conclude that I would not put myself to an immense trouble and expense to write a book which would not find purchasers.

My plan is different from anything before attempted. I have examined and collated the radical words in 20 languages, including the seven Asiatic languages or dialects of the Assyrian stocks. This will enable me to explain many things in the English language, which have hitherto been obscure. Indeed this research has opened a field entirely new, and it is probable, will lead to many important discoveries, not only in the origin and affinity of languages but in History, sacred and profane.

The price of the work cannot be known at present; but if I live to complete it, I shall not only present you a copy, but hold myself answerable to refund the principal of the sum advanced.

With gratitude and respect, I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

From Abraham Webster. W. MSS.

Lebanon Sep^{t} 4th. 1813

Dear Brother

Opportunity now offers me to write to you By M^{r} M^{c} Culloch, a Neighbour of mine and tho the inteligence I give is of an afflicting nature yet it comes from the wise and Holy Providence of God and ought to be borne with humble pati[e]nce—

The beginning of last March I was attacked with an inflamation in my legs which raged for nearly three months and was attended with much pain, after the weather grew warm the inflamation abated, and I broke out in pimples all over my body and limbs, this continues and is very uncomfortable especially when still and in the night season, it is an obstinate Disorder and no medicine I take gives me relief. My wife also is unwell was taken with a slow fever

in the month of June, and when it subsided was followed with the same disorder that attends myself. What makes it tedious is burning & iching rather than soreness for the skin is not broken but rough as a Cucumber, we have reason to fear that as the cold weather advances it will be a means to increase the Malidy we wish to be sincerely resigned to the will of Heaven wheather it be sickness or health

I have been able to do but little Labour this Summer and my present indisposition forbids my visiting Father this Autumn. If he continues I intend to afford him assistance as opportunity presents—Sophia's health is better than it was last winter—Accept Our Love and good wishes for the hapiness of youself and Your family

Emily Webster was married to William Wolcott Ellsworth on September 14th, 1813, and went to Hartford to live.

At all periods Webster's private interests were often merged in public affairs, for he concerned himself always with the larger movements of his generation. Thus he 'was for nine sessions [1800-1807] a member of the General Assembly; councilman of New Haven, 1799-1804; alderman, 1806-1809; and Judge of the County Court from 1806-1810. In Massachusetts he was a Member of the General Court in 1814, 1815 and 1817.'[1] While in Amherst he also served as selectman of the town.

Two more of his local activities were his directorship of the Hampshire Bible Society, his vice-presidency of the Hampshire and

[1] *Yale Biographica*, F. B. Dexter.

Hampden Agricultural Society, and a project 'to Incorporate a Ministerial fund in the first parish of Amherst,' a benevolent scheme which came to naught.

While serving in the Massachusetts House of Representatives he spent a part of several winters in Boston, but we believe that his family remained in Amherst, though making occasional visits to the large circle of Boston kin.

Also in looking over her husband's papers, Mrs. —— found the constitution of the first Sunday school in Amherst, planned and drawn up by Webster in the year ——[1]

He was active as well in planning a union of the different parishes in Amherst, and the subject was discussed by those of the first and second, but the movement did not succeed.

Three months before he began serving as a legislator of Massachusetts the much discussed Hartford Convention was called, in the early stages of which Webster took an active part. The causes of discontent which led up to that public protest were felt very generally through all the states which could boast of any commerce. The war of 1812 was believed to be the result of the policy of President Jefferson and his immediate successor, and aroused a bitter feeling not only in the Federalists as was natural, but also in a wide circle of the more moderate voters whose pockets were of more importance to them than their party principles. In this stress and

[1] The name and date were left blank in my mother's MS.—[Ed.]

excitement Judge Joseph Lyman[1] issued the following letter:

W. MSS.

Northampton Janu^{y} 5th 1814.

Sir

In consequence of the alarming state of our public affairs, and the doubts which have existed as to the correct course to be pursued by the Friends of Peace; it has been thought advisable by a number of gentlemen in this vicinity, who have conversed together upon the subject, that a meeting should be called of some few of the most discreet and intelligent inhabitants of the old County of Hampshire for the purpose of a free and dispassionate discussion touching our public conserns—the Legislature will soon be in session and would probably be gratified with a knowledge of the feelings and wishes of the people, and should the gentlemen who may be assembled recommend any course to be pursued by our fellow citizens for the more distinct expression of the public sentiment, it is necessary the proposed meeting should be called at an early day—we have ventured therefore to propose that it should be holden at Colo[nel] Chapmans in this Town on Wednesday the nineteenth day of Jan^{y} current at 12'oClock in the forenoon, and earnestly request your attendance at the above time and place, for the purpose before stated.

With much respect I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant

Endorsed by Webster: See the Circular Letter, signed by Judge Lyman, Chairman. Origin of Hartford Convention, Paper No. 1.[2]

[1] See Appendix XXIX. below.
[2] See Appendix XXX. below.

The circular letter runs as follows:

W. MSS.

January 5th 1814

Sir,

The multiplied evils, in which the United States have been involved by the measures of the late and present administration, are the subjects of general complaint, and in the opinion of our wisest statemen, call for some effectual remedy. His Excellency, the Governor of the Commonwealth, in his addresses to the General Court at the last and present Session, has stated, in temperate, but clear and decided language, his opinion of the injustice of the present war, and intimated that measures ought to be adopted by the Legislature to bring it to a speedy close. He also calls the attention of the Legislature to some measures of the General Government, which are believed to be unconstitutional. In all the measures of the General Government, the people of the United States have a common concern; but there are some laws and regulations, which call more particularly for the attention of the Northern States and are deeply interesting to the people of this Commonwealth. Feeling this interest, as it respects the present and future generations, a number of Gentlemen, from various towns in the Old County of Hampshire, have met and conferred on the subject, and upon full conviction that the evils we suffer are not wholly of a temporary nature, springing from the war, but some of them of a permanent character, resulting from a perverse construction of the Constitution of the United States itself, we have thought it a duty we owe to our country, to invite the attention of the good people of the Counties of Hampshire, Hampden and Franklin, to the radical causes of these evils.

We know indeed that a negotiation for peace has been recently set on foot; and peace will remove many public evils. It is an event we ardently desire. But when we

consider how often the people of this country have been disappointed in their expectations of peace and of wise measures, and when we consider the terms which our administration has hitherto demanded, some of which it is certain cannot be obtained, and some of which, in the opinion of able statemen, ought not to be insisted on, we confess our hopes of a speedy peace are not very sanguine.

But still a very serious question occurs—whether without an amendment of the Federal Constitution, the Northern and Commercial States can enjoy the advantages to which their wealth, strength and white population justly entitle them. By means of the representation of slaves, the Southern States have an influence in our National Councils, altogether disproportioned to their wealth, strength and resources; and we presume it to be a fact, capable of demonstration, that for about twenty years past, the United States have been governed by a representation of about two-fifths of the actual property of the country.

In addition to this, the creation of New States in the South, and out of the original limits of the United States, has increased the Southern interest, which has appeared so hostile to the peace and commercial prosperity of the Northern States. This power assumed by Congress of bringing into the Union new States, not comprehended within the territory of the United States at the time of the Federal Compact, is deemed arbitrary, unjust, and dangerous, and a direct infringement of the Constitution. This is a power that may be hereafter extended; and the evil will not cease with the establishment of peace. We would ask, then, ought the Northern States to acquiesce in the exercise of this power? To what consequences would it lead? How can the people of the Northern States answer to themselves and to their posterity, for an acquiescence in the exercise of a power, that augments an influence already destructive of our prosperity, and will

in time annihilate the best interests of the Northern people.

There are other measures of the General Government, which, we apprehend, ought to excite serious alarm. The power assumed to lay a permanent embargo, appears not to be constitutional, but an encroachment upon the rights of our citizens, which calls for decided opposition. It is a power, we believe, never before exercised by a commercial nation; and how can the Northern States, which are habitually commercial, and whose active foreign trade is so necessarily connected with the interest of the farmer and mechanic, sleep in tranquillity under such a violent infringement of their rights? But this is not all. The late act imposing an Embargo is subversive of the first principles of civil liberty. The trade coastwise between different ports *in the same state*, is arbitrarily and unconstitutionally prohibited, and the subordinate officers of government are vested with powers altogether inconsistent with our republican institutions. It arms the President and his Agents with complete control of persons and property, and authorises the employment of military force to carry its extraordinary provisions into execution.

We forbear to enumerate all the measures of the Federal Government, which we consider as violations of the Constitution, and encroachments upon the rights of the people, and which bear particularly hard upon the commercial people of the North. But we would invite our fellow citizens to consider whether peace will remedy our public evils, without some amendments of the Constitution, which shall secure to the Northern States their due weight and influence in our National Councils.

The Northern States acceded to the representation of slaves as a matter of compromise, upon the express stipulation in the Constitution, that they should be protected in the enjoyment of their commercial rights. These stipulations have been repeatedly violated, and it cannot be

expected that the Northern States should be willing to bear their proportion of the burdens of the Federal Government, without enjoying the benefits stipulated.

If our fellow citizens should concur with us in opinion, we would suggest, whether it would not be expedient for the people in Town Meetings to address memorials to the General Court at their present Session, petitioning that honorable body to propose a convention of all the Northern and Commercial States by Delegates to be appointed by their respective Legislatures, to consult upon measures in concert, for procuring such alterations in the Federal Constitution as will give to the Northern States a due proportion of representation, and secure them from the future exercise of powers injurious to their commercial interests;—Or if the General Court shall see fit, that they would pursue such other course, as they, in their wisdom, shall deem best calculated to effect the objects.

The measure is of such magnitude that we apprehend a concert of States will be useful and even necessary to procure the amendments proposed; and should the people of the several towns concur in this opinion, it would be expedient to act on the subject without delay.

We request you, Sir, to consult with your friends on the subject, and if it should be thought advisable to lay this communication before the people of our town.

In behalf and by direction of the Gentlemen assembled,

JOSEPH LYMAN, Chairman.

Endorsed: This is the germ of the celebrated Hartford Convention, N. W.[1]

[1] * * * 'The report of the convention represented the extreme of moderation felt by the members, and the calm discussion of secession was creditable, when it is remembered that it had been seriously considered by leading New England Federalists for ten years before the convention was called. They felt themselves bound to the Union by a slender thread, and showed that they were not unwilling to break it if uncomfortably pressed.' *John C. Calhoun*, Gaillard Hunt, p. 90.

That the discontent was very prevalent throughout New England we have every testimony, and we give some personal letters hitherto unpublished:

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston 17. February 1814

* * * As to the *political* part of your letter which may be said to be almost the whole of the letter, I mean as to *quantity*, I am gratified with every sentiment in it, except that I despair of obtaining the political justice that is due to New England. To utter my conviction plainly to you, I have no hope. I consider that a tyrant's foot is upon our neck and we are undone: for his power is great as his inclination is wicked. By the tyrant I mean, not mearly Madison, but the Southern Policy. It's creatures and dependents are now so ramified all over the Union that there is no one State unanimous enough to have its cries heard. As to any new mode that you say may be divised in the election of president to prevent intrigue, are you not aware that you must ask the leave of those very villains who depend upon intrigue for the presidency? Do we ask for anything which they do not laugh at? As to a separation, I think of it as old Sam Adams thought of *independance*. 'People,' he would say, 'pretend they love England and love the King, but [that] they hate the administration of Lord North and have no wish to separate, when in their hearts they know,' said he, 'the time has come when we ought to part, for we can live together no longer.' The only hope which lies at the bottom of my Pandora box, is that when you and I are dead, the *dear people* will have suffered so much as to create sufficient unanimity in each of the States interested to make a common cause, and tell the Western folks as Abraham told Lot. The comparison does not run upon all fours because Lot had his choice which to

take, but the principle is in nature. I am of opinion that the Commercial States which you mention at the end of your letter, are exactly as you describe them, and sincerely wish, but have no hope, to see the time when the grandeur of your plan shall be consummated.

Ever yours,

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston, 20th May 1814.

DEAR BROTHER:

I have this moment received yours of the 17th and we know not which circumstance to rejoice at most, your election to our Legislature, or my family's expectation of seeing *sister* in Boston. Bring her to our house, where she must remain whilst in town. In the *summer* we suffer no inconvenience from lending our chamber to any *loving* couple, and taking for ourselves the chamber over it, which is full as convenient as the one we occasionally quit for it except as to *avenues* that lead to it, which are sometimes serpentine and not so proper for strangers (you know *Becky* is a stranger). In this way so far from disturbing us, you may confide that our happiness will be increased *very much* by receiving both of you. Whether we should alter our accustomed arrangements for only the *masculine* I do not know.

But when a lady's in the case,
You know all other things give place.

Ever yours,

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston 16th. Sepr 1814

DEAR BROTHER:

I thank you for your favour of 10th. instant. I have not time, and if I had, my mind is not easy enough to observe upon the political parts of it only in general to say that I am afraid your sentiments are all too well founded.

I have not heard a word of Cranch only that, as his townsman Major Catlet told me, the family lived 3 miles out of the city of Alexandria. I understand that most of his property, and *all* sister Appleton's and full half of blind brother's are lost by the destruction of the bridge.[1] And indeed had it not been burned, I think that the local sufferings in the district of Columbia would have rendered it unproductive. I have not heard a word of Sam[l] Eliot. My Baltimore branch is 8 miles from Baltimore except[g] W[m] Eliot who is in the city, taking care of the little property left behind and my son James who marched to the North point and, as I suppose, was among those who made the first fire on the English as they landed.* Whether he is preserved again I do not know. I have heard in a dozen different ways, tho' *he* has not written any of us, that in the battle of Bladensburg he behaved remarkably well and was among the very few who brot back their muskets. He was beat out on his return, with fatigue, but had recovered & as W[m] writes me by letter of 12[th]. instant, had marched in high spirit to repel the foe. I think it probable that whilst I am writing this they are either in Baltimore or back to their ships after a bloody conflict in which gentlemen were pitted against the rough scruff of all nations under the name of Brittish.

Should the foe be worsted or lose many men or even get foot hold in Baltimore I should doubt whether they would visit Boston this season. And before another may the GOD of mercy give us peace, even should it be on the terms and thro' the instrumentality of such means and proceedings as you mention. Our country brethren have poured into our help most zealously. May GOD bless them! The continued rains are very unfavorable to them.

[1] By the British.—[Ed.]

*[Marginal Note.] His company is attached to the 5[th] Reg[t] which *rumor* says fired on the landers on the 12[th].

My Harry who has joined a company of Infantry was throwing dirt on Noddle's island all yesterday. Tom has joined the cadets. There is a spirit of emulation among the different companies, who shall do most in town. I have engaged a house some miles out for my women and children in case of alarm. Sister Appleton and Mary would go to Daniel's. For were the foe to attempt Boston they would land either at Dorchester or Chelsea or up the harbor. But I suppose sister Appleton will be *married* before the Brittish come here, unless they are very quick. She was published[1] for the first time yesterday to Joseph Haven of Portsmouth. He is the same age that D^r^. Appleton would now have been—was among his most intimate companions and his relative. He is an amiable, pious, & respectable merchant, & of as much estate as any gentlemen need have who lives as I do—indeed I do not think he can spend his income. The alarm at Portsmouth may have altered his plans and arrangements as to the time of the intended marriage: whether it will hasten or defer I do not know. But we are all so well pleased with the match that the sooner she has so good a protector I think the better. I am a great sufferer by the event: for I had placed sister so near my wife, that I hoped they would grow old together. But as the intended connection is one of sentiment, and even of mutual affection, as much as any second marriage can be, after so endearing a union as the former one was, I submit and am even thankful. Nobody can trudge on thro' old age so well as man & wife together when well sorted. There is a sort of dependence when a parent lives with the very best of children. And should Mary get married her mother would be alone or live with children who love her as they ought; but marriage, I mean a good one, includes no idea of dependence. I forgot to say that Mary is to go with her mother and M^r^. Haven has no children but an adopted daughter with whom Mary is

[1] The banns of matrimony.—[Ed.]

intimate. I have told you all the family matters that I can think of. Sister Bell is at Cambridge—Salem friends as they were, New Bedford friends the same.

Your brother

DAWES.

P. S. We had a lovely visit from your El[l]sworths. Why did you not write me whether *he* liked us. Had he tarried I would have shown him to all our great folks. He has a great deal of natural ease and politeness about him. I have mentioned only his ornaments. But I believe he has also much of his father's masculine character to support them. I tell you, very sincerely, he is one of those I love at first sight, and am sure should love better by further acquaintance. And this is said by a fastidious old man, not easily pleased with new comers; rather attached to companions half a hundred years old.

Chancellor Kent writes [New York October 8th. 1814] W. MSS, after acknowledging the receipt of a letter from Webster with his '*Oration on the 4. of July*':

My Sentiments are in unison with yours on the great Points of national Policy, & I look upon the State of this Country as most distressing for the present time, & very cheerless in Prospect. It is probably best to hobble along as well as we can for the present & await the course of Events for the ensuing winter. Probably we may have Peace, & this will be some alleviation.

As to the Imperfections of the federal government I see & lament them, & they have been greatly aggravated by the accession of New Territory & above all by the weak & wicked Policy of the South. But I apprehend it is the lesser Evil to cling to the Ship as long as she can swim [cut out] * * * health & vigor must be derived from N. England, & If I can be brought to believe that an Administration

will continue the War rather than make Peace on what you & I deem just Principles of public Law, that administration must be changed or the Union is gone forever. We shall certainly be irretrievably ruined if things go on in this course much longer. I look to the East for consolation & you must continue to defend Yourselves, to husband your Strength & resources, to arraign this profligate War & the profligate & malignant Policy which sways the Councils of the Union, & if the worst comes to the worst, *you will at last save yourselves & us with you.*

I beg you to excuse me for not writing more fully. I am overwhelmed here with avocation & Business. Permit me to say you enjoy my high & steady Esteem & regard, that I recall our former more intimate acquaintance with tender recollection, & I wish most cordially your Health & Happiness.

[Signature cut out.]

From ABRAM WEBSTER. W. MSS.

Lebanon December 3d. 1814

DEAR BROTHER

God in his Holy and wise Providence has seen fit to take from me my only and beloved son under Circumstances peculiarly aggrevating. He was called with the melitia to Sacketts Harbor the beginning of September where he enjoyed comfotable health untill about the 20th of Octr, when he was attacked with the Diare. He remained in the barracks 5 or 6 days and thus no doubt suffered greatly being as we learn neglected by the Surgeon—he walked out of Camp about a mile and in the course of a few days by the help of waggons was conveyed 10 miles and lodged with a family where as we have reason to believe he had good attention paid to him a Physion [*sic*] was called but no relief of his Disorder could be obtained he languished there 12 day and then expired but not untill as we humbly hope God of his Sovereign mercy had bowed his wicked heart

and brought him to submit to Jesus Christ and to trust in him alone for pardon and forgiveness. The Ground of our hope we build upon verbal information from the family where he lodged and where he Died. they sent us word that they had reason to believe he left the wo[r]ld a true penitent and that a Clergy man who visited him and his Physician who is said to be a professor of Religion entertained a hope for him—what his state now is we have no business to enquire. God has Disposed of him as his infinite wisdom saw would be most for his own Glory. our duty is Cheerfully to submit to his Holy will in all things and to rejoice that we are in the hand, of just such a God as he is who will do no injustice to any of his Creatures. Gods way[s] are marvelous and his Judgments are a great deep which the short line of understanding cannot fathom who knows but in his Eternal counsel he Determined to take this very method to bring my dear Son to a sense of his corrupt heart, to take him a distance from a Father's house cast him among strangers visit him with sickness and no earthly relative to look to, in his distress he might be led to look to God alone and stay himself on the mighty God of Jacob who knoweth but God ment by taking away the son cutting away the principle Earthly prop, the Parents might be led to rest themselves on the Lord in whome is Ever lasting strength.

Dear Brother, Divine Providence has be[en] exceedingly kind to me and my family since we have lived in this region has bestowed many undeserved favours upon us both special and common but I have been unthankfull my heart was too lifted up with pride and I have not rendered unto him according to benefits received. He the[n] is therefore justly testifying his displeasure against me for my sin and ingratitude.

My Son in Law Amos Blair went to assist Seymour and help him home he arrived 24 [hours] before his desease he was rational and conversed freely said he had a desire to se

his parents before he left the world if it had been Gods will but hoped he felt resigned he repeatedly Desired his nurs to boulster him up in the bed and read a Chapter in the Bible which she did, and he prayed with aparent engagedness audibly. He was Dec[e]ntly interred in the common Grave Yard in the Town of Adams a Sermon was Preached on the occasion Amos Blair the only relative present. His case never was represented to me [as] very alarming if it had bee[n] I should have visited him myself. Died November 21st aged 25 years, & 2 days.

My health is much better than it was a year ago and so is my wifes and Sophia they both unite with me in love to you and family.

Pray for your afflicted brother.[1]

From Abraham Webster. W. MSS.

Lebanon December 3d. 1815

Dear Brother

Two years and more have elapsed since I have heard a word from you. It is an old saying that no news is good news. I therefore rest easy in my mind with regard to you and family concluding that if any thing had taken place which was needfull for me to know you would have written.

As for myself I find my bodyly strength Decaying through advance of age and the severe trials which a Just God has seen fit to prove me with, and I humbly hope it has been the means of Disingageing my effections in some measure from the fading vanities of this world and fixing them on things Heavenly and Divine Dear Brother God has given me a long opportunity to repent of my sins and embrace the Gospel of his Son and has called upon me both by his word and Providence and I am enexcusable if I do not

[1] Another nephew, Nelson, son of Charles Webster, had shown such gallantry at the battle of Erie that he was promoted on the spot.

attend to His calls, and be ready to follow my Deceased Relatives into the Eternal world. The Death of our son has been the heaviest affliction we were ever called to bear Yet God has supported us hitherto and given us Strength according to our day. He is a faithfull God and able to deliver all such as put their trust in him but we need more Grace and Faith to enable us to put our trust in Him.

As to our family it consists of five in Number Sally & her Husband are with us and their little Daughter. Have been prospered the last sumer in our crops and also Bees and we are in pretty good health.

Our Love to you and family.

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston, 7th January 1815.

DEAR BROTHER:

After various trials to procure the sort of lodgings which you described in your favor of the 27th ult: I think I have succeeded pretty well. A very worthy widow, Mrs. More takes a few boarders in a very respectable house in my street on the Easterly side, opposite the lane in which my Emily lives. If you look out of my front door to the left, you will see the house front'g exactly as does my house occupied by Mr. May. It is the head of Harris's wharf. Mrs. More has a young couple there by the name of Tappan, and a Mr Bridge. You can have a chamber—the price of the board 7 Dolls per week. My son Tom proposed the place, it having been suggested by his Miss Cunningham who knew Mrs More in her husband's life time. The only objection is the distance to the State House—but that distance is one cause of the comparative cheapness of such good lodgings. There may be one other objection viz you cannot go *directly* to or from the State House without passing *my* domicil, consequently submitting to a sort of obligation of coming on and taking

tea or pot luck much oftener than you would be obliged to do, should your lodgings be nearer to the State House. But there can be no accommodation in this world without some inconvenience.

Please to write me whether I shall engage for you at M^rs^ More's. My own advice to you is to swallow the objections I have so fairly stated as well as you can and let me engage the place. Two days ago I wrote by W^m^ G. Appleton & wife to your son Ellsworth, thank'^g^ him, tho very late, for his letter of information concerning Emily's nine pound baby son. We are all very well and wish you a happy New Year.

Yours with affection,

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston 16^th^. May 1816.

DEAR BROTHER;

We rejoice at your domestic prospects. My wife was saying yesterday that she knew of no parents more fortunate than you and Becky in the connections of their daughters.[1] This opinion, however, so far as relates to Juliet & Harriet (for she knows Elsworth) she borrows from me who have learned the characters of Goodrich & Cobb. I have seen both of them and have heard much of them, and very much to my gratification. Mr. Cobb was kind enough to call upon me last evening. Half a dozen of my club were present. An odd incident occurred, which however increased the interest I had taken in him, and, as I am persuaded, could not impair any regard he might have had for me. As I had seen him but once before, when I omitted, as I am too apt to do, to fix his countenance in my memory, I did not recognize him upon his first entering my parlor last evening. I supposed it was a doctor Coffin whom I had never seen, but whom Doctor Dexter had mentioned as a Candidate for

[1] On May 22nd, 1816, the third child Harriet was married to Mr. Edward Cobb of Portland, Maine, son of a leading merchant in the West Indian trade.

our Club. I noticed him therefore as such; supposing that he was known to my friends who were present, tho' not to me. It happened well that Sam[l]. Cobb, with whom he is intimate, sate next to him. After some time had elapsed he asked me whether I had letters from Amherst. My mistake instantly occurred to me and I remembered his countenance and introduced him to all but Sam[l]. Cobb. After he was gone they were much pleased at the familiar unembarrassed manner in which he had appeared all the time he was unknown to them by reason of my clumsy mistake. My principal motive in request[g] his father to bid him call upon me was to invite him to bring Harriet with him to my house whilst in Boston on their way to Portland. But his intimate friend S. Cobb had forestalled me in this.

M[r]. Goodrich passed an hour with me the last time he was in Boston very much to my satisfaction. I hope he will settle in Boston, because he would do much good among us, whereas in Connecticut people do not require to be made so much better as we do. I always thought, however, that Middletown was a delightful rus in urbe. We hope you will bring Becky to see us soon, now you are to have a line of children & grand children running Eastwardly and thro Boston.

I was made quite happy in the account M[r]. Goodrich gave me of your contract with Hudson. The evening of your life will be easy and independent, I doubt not. We are all pretty well in this region. My wife has had some relapses of her spasmodic complaints; but is about house once more. My Colony at Baltimore were well last week. Thomas & Harrison are in full business as copartners and are successful Brother & sister Haven, I suppose, arrived there on Tuesday. They sate away from Boston more than a week ago after sojourning with us a few days.

Love to Becky & children,

your brother DAWES.

Ain't you coming to 'Lection?

From Emily Webster Ellsworth.

Augst 5th 1816[1]

My dear father—

Will you honor your daughter on her birth day so far as to accept & wear a tortoise snuff box in lieu of the one you lost? I have sought for one still more worthy of your acceptance than a plain silver lined box but can not procure one in Hartford.

My affectionate remembrance to all my dear family at Amherst

Yrs as ever my
hon^{d} father with duty & love

Endorsed. Emily W. Ellsworth with a birth day present.

From Thomas Dawes, Jun. W. MSS.

Boston 7th. December 1816

Dear brother

Accept our Thanks for the Firkin of excellent butter which you sent; not so small a one as your letter described it to be. It came in a very good season for us; and tho' we do not require any memorial of our brother Webster, yet at breastfasts and tea times a slice of the Amherst butter freshens our recollection. I need not inform one who has read Locke and every other author upon the association of ideas how one link of thoughts is connected with another and how a morsel of butter may be the entering wedge to a thousand imaginations, first Amherst, then Hartford, then Middletown & then Portland and all who belong there whom we care about &c &c &c

We rejoice that your three accomplished *good* girls have

[1] This letter and the snuff-box are now in the possession of my sister, Mrs. Richmond Mayo-Smith. Strangely enough, in 1885, the original and larger one, made of the same materials, with N. W. engraved on its lid, was found in Philadelphia by a family friend, who purchased it and presented it to me.—[Ed.]

been so favored by Divine Providence.[1] Altho we deserve nothing from our heavenly benefactor, yet we cannot but observe his hand in some of the distributions of his benefits. Between the two last Thanksgivings my own family have experienced some vicissitudes, but no very great calamity. The blessings have most abundantly outbalanced the afflictions. Indeed the only one among the latter deserving notice is the failure of Eliot. As to Goddard, his integrity induced him to *stop*, as merchants call it, lest his creditors should suffer: and I believe that no losses have been sustained by them. He has taken my Emma a little further off. They are at Washington. I cannot judge of his plan, but my Baltimore children speak well of it. Yesterday we had letters from Sister Bell. Delia is yet living. Brother Pope's mind is gone. Last Sunday, whilst they were at dinner, he worked his way down stairs, to their astonishment, and took his seat at the table and made a hearty meal, tho' he had just dined above stairs. He did not appear conscious of what he was about. His two sons and Dr. Perry had quite a lug to restore him to his chamber. Alas—what is Man! Brother Daniel's giddy turns are as frequent as ever, tho' not so severe. I think they are epileptic. The late decease of my neighbor John Tileston brings my own mortality nearer to my view than any event that ever happened. Tho' Purchase Street extends from Summer Street up to Forthill, there is not one person left, since Tileston's death, amid its great population, with whom I can hold a dialogue about any thing that occurred 50 years ago, And I know, for I have overheard it, that I am called *old* Mr. Dawes, and the little *old* judge. How long my faculties, such as they are, will be spared to me I know not, but they are put into daily and trying requisitions. I lately lost a whole night's sleep in determining what sentence to inflict upon a young man of 20. I at last determined,

[1] Julia Webster was married on October 1st, 1816, to Rev. Chauncey Allen Goodrich.—[Ed.]

and acted accordingly; and have been satisfied with myself ever since. I mention this sample of Egotism just to show that my life is not an idle one; and I have no wish to survive any proper employment to which I may be equal. Let us 'work whilst the day lasts'—tho' I am sensible that this is said upon a more solemn subject, the *religion* of our lives, I would to God I had more of it: I love dearly those who have. I may have told you that I sleep on the very spot where I took my first breath 60 years ago next summer, and where both my parents breathed their last.

Give our love to Becky & tell her that her sister Dawes is in as good health as she has been in, for some years.

Yours affectionately,

P. S. The little address to the grand jurors, part of which you saw when here, I delivered, & it was published at request of the chief Justice. I send it to you, as the papers in which it appeared may not be taken by you. I send you also my obituary notice of aunt Waters. My sendg. *my* productions to *you* is not unlike our Mather Boyles sendg. his poems to Pope. Pope complimented him with a set of his works & wrote him 'how glad he was that the Muses were on the Western side of the Atlantic.' The old fool took the hoax as earnest.

Since writing the foregoing I have looked in vain for my brief obituary of Aunt Waters. I suppose one of my girls has stolen it and sent it to Baltimore accordg. to custom.

From ABRAHAM WEBSTER. W. MSS.

Lebanon April 4th. 1818

DEAR BROTHER

After neglecting to write to you for more than two years I feel it to be my duty to acknowledge my fault, and hope in future I shall be more faithfull. The neglect has

not arisen from any want of affection to you and your Family but solely from my own inadvertiancy.

We live in [a] world of Changes and trials prosperity and adversity by turns succeed each other. Health ease and comfort is often followed with sickness pain and bodyly distress. Old age and infirmities succeed Youth and Vigor. But let it be remembered that Jehovah sits at the head of the universe & orders and directs all events both in the natureal and morral world in the wisest and best possible manner to display his own Glory. We are his creatures and in his hand and He has a Sovereign right to deal with us as seemeth good in his sight. If he sees best to lay his afflicting hand upon us and remove by Death our near friends and relations or if he bring Sickness and pain upon us he is infinitely Good in doing it, and if we feel as we ought toward God we shall view Him to be as Good when we are suffering pain & distress. as in time of health & ease Altho no affliction for the present is joyous but Grieveous yet in the end it Yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are properly exercised thereby It has been the will of God to send afflictions upon my family for more than three years past with but little intermition my wife was taken with a fiver in the month of June the summer before last which lasted about two months & in September following she by a fall dislocated her shoulder. a Rheumatic Complaint soon attacked her and she has not been able to put her clothes off and on since, at present she is not in hard pain when lying or siting still and when up can walk, and for the most part sleeps comfortably at night.

As for my self, two Years ago the present month I was visited with a severe illness the billirous fever and it left me in a billerous habit so that I was unable to labour untill the winter past and am at this time far from being in health— there seems to be a struggle between nature & the disease which shall get the mastery and nature seems at present to be geting the advantage but I think this cannot last long

I am far advanced in age and feel its infirmaties very sencibly and must soon exchange this life for an untried state of existence to be prepared for an exchange of world[s], is of Infinite importance to us and ought to engage our most serious attention and persevering obedience, earnestly imploreing Divine Grace for direction in duty, that we may give our hearts wholly to God and live intirely devoted to his service, trusting alone in the merits of Jesus Christ for Justifycation & acceptance with God.

I made a visit last [torn] N Haven on account of my health and upon feeding too freely [on?] shell fish on my first arival there it brought on a relax which was the reverse of my natural habit which continued so severe that I began to be somewhat alarmed & finding I could not feed on Oysters I tarried but five days. However I have since believed that opperation was salutary for me. In West Hartford I tarried a few days. I should have gone to Amherst if my health had been gaining but fearing it was not & hearing you was gone a long Journey I thought it most prudent to make the best of my way homeward. W Hartford appeared rather a gloomy place to me Our Honou[d] Father, Brother Belden & Brother Charles had been taken away and their Widows not in agreeable circumstances particularly Sister Belden whose situation I viewed as very unpleasant I do not believe she is treated by all the family as she ought to be. She is old and lame and ought not to be made a slave to those who are younger. Mr. Gridley was there with his wife & would willingly have taken her home but Sister had not concluded to go with him when I came away. I hope she is a Widow indeed trusting in the Lord. Then she will be provided for.

My Son in Law, Dolly['s] Husband occupyes my farm since Seymo's Death except about 4 acres which I reserve to amuse myself upon he lived two years in the house with me but now lives in his own house adjoining the farm. A hired girl is all the help we have. I have been able to feed

my Cattle & draw my wood after it is cut for the winter past.

Love to all

N. B. my Friends who write [are] requested to direct their letters to be conveyed to the post [torn] ton.

Despite his best intentions it was impossible for Webster with his wide outlook, quick sympathies, and active, executive ability to confine himself merely to his own avocations. He entered, with his characteristic ardor, into the literary and social interests of the people among whom he was placed. His extensive library was open to all, and his elevated tone of thought and conversation, had naturally a powerful influence on the habits and feelings of a small and secluded population.

The primary schools all over the country were of a low order, and in Amherst there were none but district schools.

'I remember well the forlorn, unpainted, and unshaded building on one side of the village green. There was an entry way where hats and cloaks were kept and then one large room with an open fire place at each end and in winter full of green logs with the sap oozing out of them. Two or three rows of hard benches with desks before them were on each side and a tall desk in the centre of the room was for the teacher. There were no maps or pictures of any kind—no maps or equipments for the assistance of the teacher, but I remember that the children were happy and anxious to learn. But the gentlemen of

Amherst were desirous of higher advantages for their children and funds were soon raised for an Academy, where their sons could be fitted for college and their daughters taught the higher branches of education.'[1]

Webster had a passion for education, and the fire of his enthusiasm helped to kindle the desires of the townspeople. He talked in private, he harangued in public, he showed the advantage and he pressed the necessity of it. Moreover, he gave his own daughters a far longer and higher course of study than was then customary. Indeed, he felt the need of this more advanced school in educating his younger children. There had been a subscription started in 1812, and in 1815 the Academy went into full operation, with an admirable corps of teachers and the full co-operation and sympathy of the local community. It was a center of light and warmth amid a large circle of influence.

Mrs. Jones, who received her education chiefly within its walls, says:

'The school became a favorite with the public. Its teachers were Christian gentlemen, and entirely competent for the places they filled, and the lady-teachers were refined, gentle and cultivated, and exerted a beautiful influence on their pupils.'[2]

[1] Mrs. Jones' reminiscences.

[2] The spirit of the Institution and of the town is given in this extract from a sketch by Rev. Nahum Gould, of the College Class of '25, an alumnus both of the College and the Academy: 'I came to Amherst in the spring of 1819, and studied in

The school opened with a large number of students, and attracted pupils from every part of New England. It had at one time as many as ninety pupils in the ladies' department, and quite as many more in the gentlemen's. Professor Tyler, in his interesting *History of Amherst College*, says of it: 'It was the Williston Seminary and the Mount Holyoke of that day combined.'

The success of the Amherst Academy incited the sincere, wise and austere men of that time to farther exertions in the cause of religion and education. At a meeting of the trustees on November 18th, 1817, it was resolved to raise a fund 'for the gratuitous instruction of indigent young men of promising talents and hopeful piety, who shall manifest a desire to obtain a liberal education with a sole view to Christian ministry.' This was the kernel of Amherst College. On September 10th, 1818, a convention was called by Webster—then President of

preparation for College under the direction of Joseph Estabrook and Gerald Hallock. The principal's salary was $800. per annum, and Miss Sarah Strong's $20. a month. I found the piety of the students far ahead of my own. Perhaps there never was a people that took such a deep interest in the welfare of the students. None need leave on account of pecuniary embarrassments. Tuition was free to any pious student who was preparing for the gospel ministry. Board was one dollar a week, and if this could not be afforded, there were families ready to take students for little services which they might render in their leisure hours. Their liberality was spoken of through the land, and it was an inducement to persons of limited means, preparing for ministry, to come to Amherst. Noah Webster resided here preparing his Dictionary. He took an interest in the Academy and opened his doors for an occasional reception, which we prized very highly.'

the Board of Trustees of the Academy—John Fiske, and Rufus Graves, for the 'establishment of a Charitable Institution.' The portfolio of papers relating to the *History of Amherst College* is filled with circulars, addresses, letters and documents showing his active interest in the scheme. Indeed, his labors for the College drew him away from his lexicographer's table, and he gave some years of faithful co-operative work with the admirable men who were pushing the establishment of the College to a successful issue, assisting them with his pen, his voice, his judgment and his influence until the laborious negotiations were successful, and the raising of funds was ensured.[1]

He delivered the address at the laying of the corner stone of the College on the 9th of August, 1820, as Vice-President of the Board of Trustees of Amherst Academy, and at the close of the exercises, Dr. Parsons having resigned, Webster was elected President of the Board.[2]

[1] See Appendix XXXI. below.

[2] 'I have told you of my Father's interest in the establishment of the Academy. He could contribute little, if at all, in a pecuniary way, as his purpose in going there was to live economically, and escape from indebtedness, but his heart and judgment sanctioned the enterprise of the gentlemen who had more means at command. At that time the so-called orthodox community were very solicitous for a college in the state, the influence of which might counteract the strong Unitarian teachings of Harvard. It was a time of controversy in the churches, and of strong feeling, and it was deemed important that there should be in Massachusetts, a strictly religious institution of an Evangelical character. Williams College was such an one and had the confidence of the churches, but in those days of slow travel, it was out of the way among the hills

From this time on Webster gave his more undivided interest to the *Dictionary*. He was still anxious about his family's support, although by marriage its dependent numbers had been

and its numbers were very small, and there were very many of its best friends who greatly desired the College to be removed and Amherst or Northampton to be the location chosen. My Father was one of these and used his influence for this. Great, but unsuccessful efforts were made for this change. At this present time we see how well it was that their wishes were not accomplished. Williams College is doing a noble work and is no longer inaccessible in its nest among the mountains. But this effort for removal failing, the gentlemen of central Massachusetts still thought a college was needed in that region and at last with effort and prayer, Amherst College was founded. My Father and myself watched the first loads of brick mounting slowly along the hill upon which the College stands. I remember well the expression of interest on Father's face at the time. We returned to New Haven just before the first class graduated from the Institution. In the society of the first President, Dr. Moore, Father found much pleasure while he remained in Amherst.'—Reminiscences of E. S. W. Jones.

After the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Amherst College in 1871, a descendant of Webster met by chance Rev. Ornon Eastman, one of the Secretaries of the Tract Society, who said with much feeling, 'neither Dr. Webster nor H. Wright Strong were given that mention in the history and reminiscences that their great efforts to establish the College merited. I feel it so strongly that I am going home to write a pamphlet which shall distribute the praise where the labor came from.' He died not very long after, and his papers were scattered, and upon application to Mrs. Eastman, she said that there had been such a pamphlet written, but that she had lost sight of it. Mr. Eastman was a native of Amherst, a graduate of Amherst Academy and of Amherst College, and was perfectly familiar with the earlier details of their establishment. His pamphlet is a loss to exact history.

But Webster, though he worked with his full might, cared little for any honor or expression of thanks, in connection with this—which was but a side work, to be carefully and thoroughly done—as he pressed on to his great work. Upon that work he placed his fame, and for that he was sensitive and desired appreciation; for other services to his fellow-citizens he claimed nothing but the guerdon of their success.

lessened, but his efforts to obtain subscribers were still fruitless, and had it not been for the *pot au feu* of the *Spelling Book*, he would have had but small and fluctuating support.

From JOSIAH MEIGS.[1] W. MSS.

W[ashington] City, August 21, 1818

DEAR SIR,

I received, yesterday, yours of the 11th, and regret that you have it not in your power to send the Pamphlet.

Of Alexander Hamilton I have never changed my opinion. He was a very vicious, corrupt, ambitious, and *intellectually* great man—an Archangel ruined.

There is a sort of Calm at present in our political Atmosphere—it is not at all improbable that a Storm may succeed sooner than we wish or expect.

I have much confidence in the present administration. The President has had much experience, and is I verily believe an honest man. The Heads of departments are men of real ability. I never enquire their views. I believe that the Policy of England with regard to the Floridas & Spanish America will not succeed. We have but one enemy—viz: England. All other Nations wish us well, for they all look to us for the powerful lever which will upturn the Gigantic Fabric of a Monopoly of the Navigation & Trade of the World.

Our Government goes on '*vi insitu.*' All the great men, nearly, are gone from the City or rather the Village. Only the Secy of State & of War are here, & the Secy of State will leave us in a few days for Boston.

This place is increasing as rapidly as I wish; it will never be a more pleasant residence than it now is, and it is, indeed, a Pleasant Village. I have no where seen such

[1] At this time Land Commissioner of the United States.

abundance of pure water; this is of immense value to health & pleasure.

The Season has been wonderfully favourable to the Farmer & Planter. The Crop of Corn (Mahiz) will be equal to any ever known.

'Aurea fruges
Virginiæ pleno diffudit copia cornu.'[1]

—but Horace never saw *Indian Corn* nor *Solanum Tuberosum, Irish Potatoe*, the two most valuable products of this Earth, & which America has presented to the *Old World*, as it is improperly called. I have access to Books almost to the extent of my wishes. My office is under the same Roof with the Jeffersonian Nat Library—a Library of inestimable value to such men as Abbe Correa, who spends much of his time in it. I have also the use of our friend Barlow's valuable Library & of the City Library.

The business of my Office is great & rapidly increasing—I have 23 Clerks constantly employed, and yet they are not able to prevent an accumulation of business.

The Executors of M^r^ Barlow have presented me the magnificent Edition of the works of Humboldt—with his Atlas Pittoresque de Nouvelle Espagne. Humboldt is the Newton of Geographers, & Geologists.

I could give you a volume of my thoughts on many subjects which have interested you and me for more than Forty Years, in other words, I am an *old man*—this day I commence the 62d year of life. I have five Children & fourteen grand children living, & I thank God they are born in a Country spacious enough for them & their descendants for many generations.

It is not probable that we shall meet in this world. I regret that you have not been able to complete your Dictionary. I am daily & hourly vexed with *England—England—England*—You see even the *Edinburgh Review*,

[1] Epistolae, I, XII.

which seemed to have some small share of *grace* has lately declared our literature good for nothing, and we are such a *Cullible* People that they almost make us own ourselves to be *Idiots*.

Affectionately yours,

From the Same. W. MSS.

W[ashington] City Oct. 5, 1818.

DEAR FRIEND:

Accept my thanks for your Pamphlet addressed to John Pickering.[1] I am gratified with every thing that points to Independence of England. With me Jealousy of England is not merely a passion—it is *instinct*—I saw, and felt, during my residence in Bermuda, more of the true & real feelings of Englishmen relative to the United States than I would have experienced in half a Century while in the bosom of my own Country.

I have no objection to the adoption of any *good* thing either of England or of any other Country—but that our learned men, and our great men should be hooked to the Car of English whims & Cockney nonsense, and adopt whatever they prescribe, or reject whatever they disapprove in language or dress or any thing else is shameful.

We, as a People have been far too good humoured—far too *cullible*. I know nothing of England which invests her with authority to dictate the words we shall use. We have had and we now have as great men as she ever produced.

You are better acquainted with Philology than any other person:—How much false praise has been given to many a person! Doctor Dwight is gone—& *de mortuis nil nisi bonum*, is perhaps a good maxim—but tho' Dwight sustained a splendid reputation as what we call a *belle lettre* scholar, I venture to assert that he never wrote a single page of correct English.[2]

[1] See Bibliography below.—[Ed.]

[2] President Timothy Dwight, of Yale.—[Ed.]

I regret that you do not pursue your Philological researches.

We have no news of importance. Our great men have for a long time been absent from the City. The Government seems to operate *in situ*, without human aid. The Revenue from Public Lands this Year will be very great—far greater than the Estimates of the Secretary of the Treasury. About 3 weeks ago sales of Lands were made at Huntsville (Alabama)—a single Township 6 miles square was sold for upwards of $512.000!! It is at the head of Munli [?] Shoals—near Miltons Bluff on the South side of the River Tennesee. The average price is about $22. an acre. The Cotton of one acre, one year, will be worth from 100 to 150 dollars. Ab. Bishop has invited me to New Haven where he says several of the Class will convene this month. I shall not be able to attend.

Affecty & Respectfully, yours.

From ABRAHAM BISHOP.[1] W. MSS.

New Haven, 9. october 1818.

Circular.

DEAR SIR,

On Wednesday, the 21. instant, several of our class will dine with me. Please to write me, by return mail, that we may expect the pleasure of your company on that occasion.

Of 40, who were graduated in 1778, 24 are supposed to be living.

Make my house your home during your stay.

I am very affectionately
Your friend & classmate

[1] The same whom Webster lampooned, in: *A Rod for the Fool's Back*. See Bibliography below.—[Ed.]

From JOSIAH MEIGS. W. MSS.

Washington City, Dec. 3, 1818.

DEAR FRIEND:

Accept my thanks for your Address to your Agricultural Society,[1] which I have read with much pleasure. I am rejoiced to mark the increase of those Societies, their effect on our general prosperity will be highly valuable. I was in Connecticut in October last, and did not find that such improvement had been made during the 20 years in which I had been absent as I expected. However there has been improvement. It is really surprising that so little regard has been paid to this most useful of all employments of Man. While I lived in Georgia I every day heard complaints that Land was worn out—to which I replied generally by asking 'Why is not the land in the Neighborhood of Paris & London worn out? It has been cultivated for many centuries, &c. &c. &c.'

We have too much land—it makes us careless and ignorant of Agriculture.

I am assured that, in Virginia, there is a considerable improvement—which is derived chiefly from German planters. That state contains much very excellent land, but Tobacco has been its ruin; the Country before it was 'as the Garden of Eden, and behind it a desolate wilderness,' and even worse than that, for it ruined the morals of the owners of the soil. The [Scottish?] merchants undermined the best estates in Virginia. On this subject you are much better informed than I am.

It has been my wish thro' life to be the owner of a small, good farm, which would maintain me & mine comfortably, but I have not been able to gratify my wish and my taste, and probably never shall be able.

In the close of your address you have set in strong & clear light a number of the contemptible and mischievous

[1] See Bibliography below.—[Ed.]

fashions of the day and I hope it will have its intended good effect.

The state of Society here is perhaps as good as could be expected in view of all the circumstances.

Considerable agitation exists relative to *Specie*, Banks, Currency, &c. &c. The only effectual remedy is to be found in Industry and Frugality—in *Father Abraham's* Advice at an Auction.[1] It is vain to [torn] and idle to complain while we import 30 or 50 millions a year more than we can pay for.

On this you & I, and all men of common observation agree.

My family is well. I have almost or quite completed the Circle. We have 5 Children, & 12 Grand Children. Mrs. M. & I now sit at table alone. Our Children are all away from us—and we have come round to the same point from which we started in May, 1782. With high Esteem, and sincere affection, I am

Yours,

You have, with this, the Daily Nat. Int^r. of the day. You will see that M^r *Madison* has written at least tolerably well on the subject of Manure & on the comparative advantages of *Horses & Oxen* in Agriculture. Whatever may be the result of more experience on the *latter* question, I think there can be no doubt as to the *former*. Attention to Manure is the *sine qua non*; it is like *Grace* in Religion—without it all is vain. But while we have such a boundless extent of new & fertile lands multitudes will quit the tombs of their Ancestors. I think, however, that the *Mania* of emigration has come to a *lucid* interval. In a Country so free from burdens & taxes as ours, almost any land will comfortably support industrious and intelligent Cultivators.

Virginia is certainly in the path of improvement. Loudon

[1] See *The Vicar of Wakefield*.—[Ed.]

County, by the aid of German farmers, is able to vie with the best Counties of Pennsylvania.

In respect of Webster's public services we learn that he drew up the answer to the address of the Governor, John Brooks. His original draft of this paper is thus endorsed: 'May session 1819, reported & published in The Centinel, June 5, 1819. Written in the room with Judge Dawes and M^rs^ Webster, N. W.' [W. MSS.]. This was after his last term as legislator, for he wrote in a private letter to Solomon Snead of Greenfield [Amherst, March 30th, 1820], giving an account of the corruptions in the legislature which he with others had attempted to correct: overcharges for printing, large salaries for trifling services, reduction of military expenses, expenses of supporting town paupers, etc. The letter concludes thus:

It is desirable that the revenue of the Commonwealth may be rendered adequate to its expenses and yield a surplus for public objects. A State like this ought not to want the means of erecting and endowing hospitals, providing funds for seminaries of learning and for public schools, and for various other useful objects. Had the plans proposed the last session succeeded according to my wishes and efforts, a liberal grant might have been made to the hospital. I trust however that future provision will be made for this and other objects without any increase of the direct tax.

I should rejoice to see a system adopted that should lay a foundation for a permanent fund for public schools; and to have more pains taken to discipline our youth in early life in sound maxims of moral, political and religious

duties. I believe more than is commonly believed, may be done in this way, toward correcting the vices and disorders of society.

The State of Massachusetts possesses a great mass of talent, enterprise and wealth, and individuals distinguish themselves by many noble enterprises of great public utility. But to be plain, Sir, I do not discover in the Commonwealth, those comprehensive views of public interest, and those prospective measures, which tend gradually to augment the resources, the strength, the dignity and prosperity of the State, which characterize the proceedings of some other states. An immense effect may be produced by small powers wisely and steadily directed. But whatever may be my wishes, my efforts can have no effect. I have had so many intimations that I am yet a stranger in the Commonwealth that I shall henceforth cease to concern myself with public affairs. [W. MSS.]

Such views are now diffused through the country, and are the common property of the wiser citizens. But in those days they were novel and alien, and show that in civil affairs as in philology Webster was in advance of his age.

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston, 28th June, 1819.

DEAR BROTHER,

Peggy is anxious to know how her sister's eye is & how you got home. In consequence of a letter that brother Daniel had written to sisters Pope and Bell, *they* were at Quincy on Saturday to meet their Amherst friends. Daniel came to us on Tuesday with this information. On Thursday Peggy and I dined at Daniel's with all the brothers & sisters. The Bedford widow sisters regretted their disappointment in not seeing Becky. I passed an hour at President Adam's.

He was cheerful and entertaining; expressed his sorrow at your not hav'g called to see him but excused it after what we said to him, and he hoped you would find another opportunity to pay and receive regards [illegible.] On Friday morning, as we were at breakfast, a coach arrived with Nath: Appleton & my Sarah, and Thomas & his wife and child with a yellow attendant girl. At noon brother & sister Haven came, and we had a table full of friends. The Havens went to Quincy that afternoon. We expect our son Harrison hourly by water. Lest major Russell should forget to send you the Newspaper contain'g your speech, I put one into the Post office for you on Saturday.[1] Your speech is very much liked every where. We expect sister Bell to pass a week or two with us: but sister Pope will return soon by way of Bridgewater, when she will stop a week at her daughter Ritchie's.

P. S. Our son Harrison has arrived in health and brother John's son Daniel with him. Daniel's master W^m^ G. Appleton hav'g given up business for the present. Daniel returned home for the present, bring'g with him as good a character from *all* as one could wish a child to have.

Peggy's love to Becky & M^rs^ Cobb & all.

Yours affectionately,

John Jay had been so continuously generous, not only in subscriptions, but also in that rarer liberality of the spirit—encouragement, that we give Webster's last letter to him, inserting first another instance of private courtesy and open-handedness. That Webster was able to repay the note shows him more easy in his circumstances.

[1] See p. 65 *ante*.

From Stephen Van Rensselaer. W. MSS.

Albany, October 20th 1820.

Dear Sir:

I received your letter on my return from Boston also your address & the interesting Sermon delivered at Amherst truly this is an age of wonders—the exertions making in the Christian World for the spread & advancement of the Redeemers Kingdom is unparalleled in History. the note of hand to which you allude I have not seen for years—I presume it is among the papers of the late Gen. Hamilton or Go Hoffman[1] of N York. I will make the enquiry the first opportunity whenever it is perfectly convenient for you to discharge the principal you will have the goodness to present it to your institution at Amherst in my behalf.

I am anticipating great pleasure from the work (which is Herculean) When finished I hope you will be remunerated for your toils & expenses. With great respect,

Yours

From the Same. W. MSS.

Albany, Jany. 2. 1821.

Dear Sir:

I received your favor with a receipt enclosed for $150. from the building Committee in Amherst—for the charitable object therein expressed—which is in full of all demands on you; the Note I have not found or I should have forwarded it; this acknowledgment I presume will be sufficient voucher of the payment.

With great respect

& your obd

From John Jay. W. MSS.

Bedford. West Chester County. N. York.

29th. Oct^{r}. 1821.

Sir

I understood from Col. Pickering about two years, since that you were going on with your great work. Nothing

[1] Probably Josiah Ogden Hoffman.—[Ed.]

further respecting it having come to my knowledge, I apprehend that either some new Obstacle, or the operation of former ones, may have retarded, tho' not terminated your Progress. Being desirous that each of my two Sons should have a Copy, I enclose a further Sum for that Purpose. In no Event are my Subscriptions or any part of them to be refunded.

Whenever you come this way, it would give me pleasure to see you here. My House is only 15 miles from Stamford.

With my best wishes for the health and welfare of yourself, and Family, I am Sir

[Signature cut out.]

To JOHN JAY.[1] W. MSS.

Amherst, Nov. 8th, 1821.

SIR:

I yesterday received your favor of the 29th *inst.* with another proof of your benevolence, for which please to accept my particular acknowledgements. As the mail returns this morning, I can only state that in a few days, I will write to you more particularly the progress I have made in my Dictionary and the reasons of delay, which I trust will be satisfactory.

Please to accept my particular respects.

To the Same.[2] W. MSS.

Amherst, Mass, Nov. 1821.

SIR:

When I began the compilation of a large Dictionary of the English Language, I limited my views chiefly to a correction of such errors as had escaped former compilers and the supply of such new terms as have sprung from modern improvements in science. But in searching for the

[1] & [2] See note on p. 117 *ante.*

originals of English words, I soon found the field of etymology had been very imperfectly explored: and one discovery succeeding another, my curiosity was excited to persevere in the pursuit. At length finding no safe clue to conduct me through the labyrinth, I adopted a new plan of investigation, that of examining and comparing the primary elements, articulations or consonants of words in 20 different languages or dialects, the vowels having been found so mutable as to be of no use. The result of this examination has been the formation of a synopsis of radical words in more than 20 languages which is complete or nearly so. This will probably form a Quarto, and be an appendix to the Dictionary.[1] This has occupied about ten years, but I do not, and I think the world will not regret the delay which this has occasioned, for if I am not deceived, the discoveries, proceeding from this investigation will be quite important, and as *new* in Europe as in America. This synopsis exhibits a vast number of affinities between the languages examined, which have never before been detected; but what I think of more value, this investigation has developed in a multitude of words, the primary sense of the root, which has not hitherto been known. There is a primary or radical sense of every verb from which all its significations, in customary use are naturally and easily deducible, and from an ignorance of this sense and the manner in which men have proceeded from the literal to metaphorical significations, the most learned Critics have often been perplexed in

[1] Webster wrote of it: 'I have on hand a manuscript, sufficient to make a quarto volume, containing a Synopsis of Radical or principal words in twenty languages. This was the fruit of ten years labor, but no bookseller will publish it, & probably I shall lose my labor. When Dr. Julius, agent of the King of Prussia, was in this country, two or three years ago, he urged me to send the MS. to Europe, assuring me that any of the literary societies in Germany or Prussia would readily publish it, but it cannot be printed, except under my own inspection.'

This Synopsis was never printed, and the MS. is in the N. Y. P. L.—[Ed.]

etermining the particular sense of words—for instance in the Hebrew ברך which signifies '*to bless, to curse.*' With the knowledge of the primary sense, these difficulties vanish.

The languages of which I have made a synopsis are the Chaldaic, Syriac, Arabic, Samaritan, Hebrew, Ethiopic, Persian, Irish (Hyberne, Celtic) Armoric, Anglo-Saxon, German, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, French, Prussian, with the English.

I am now proceeding with the Dictionary. I am engaged in the letter *H.* Making my past progress the basis of calculation, it must require the constant labor of *four years*, to complete the work even if my health should be continued. For this blessing, I rely tranquilly on the goodness and forbearance of that Being whose favor I desire to seek in the way which he has prescribed and which I trust I value above any temporal good. But I did not begin my studies early enough. I am 63 years of age, and after this age a small portion only of active life remains. If however, I should not be permitted to finish the work begun, the synopsis will enable some other person to pursue the plan with advantage, so that my labor will not be wholly lost to my country.

Since my time has been almost exclusively occupied in this pursuit, I must have expended about $25,000. This sum has been taken from my own income, except about $1000. My property which is less than half the sum represented to the public, affords an income barely sufficient for my family expenses. Many books I have wanted which I have not had the means to purchase and I still want them. The work must be copied and revised, before it can be printed and at present there are not types enough in America to print the Appendix. I cannot revise and complete the work without helps of men and books, which I cannot have in *the country*, and my income will not maintain my family in one of our large towns. If I take four or five

thousand dollars from my capital, that income will be diminished and the capital ultimately sunk. I have thought that after submitting my manuscript to able judges, if they should think the work to have merit enough to command a sale in England, I may visit that country and attempt to sell the copy there first and indeed revise the work at Oxford. But on this I am not determined. What course I shall pursue, is not certain, but I am contented to leave the event to that good Providence which has hitherto supported me.

The evening before your letter arrived, I was conversing respecting you, Sir. I said to my family that there are few men whom I wish so much to see as Gov. Jay. If our lives should be spared till next summer, I will make an effort to visit you. I have a daughter settled in New Haven, little more than 50 miles from your residence, and I usually visit her at least once a year. However this may be, I shall never forget your public services, nor your private friendship for, Sir,

Your most obliged,
and obedient servant,

From JOHN JAY.[1] W. MSS.

Bedford. West Chester County. N. York.
3d. Decr. 1821

SIR

I have recd. your Letter of the 8th. ult. and also a subsequent one not dated. Your Dictionary will doubtless derive utility and Reputation from the extensive Investigations you mention. The assiduity with which you have for many years persevered, and still persevere in accomplishing that arduous Task, will I hope be followed by Results not only beneficial to the Public, but to yourself.

[1] See note on p. 117 *ante*.—[Ed.]

There are Gentlemen in this Country, by whom I presume judicious criticisms and friendly offices would be readily afforded. In case a further Revision should be undertaken, with Zeal and Good Will, at Oxford or Cambridge, and terminate with explicit commendation, it would excite attention both in Britain & America, and produce useful consequences. To whatever Persons the Perusal of the manuscripts may be committed, permit me to hint; that they should be *very legible.* This Remark is suggested by the Recollection of an Incident which occurred many years since. The Author of a large Manuscript, written in obscure indistinct Characters requested a certain Gentleman to favor him with his opinion of it. The Gentleman after a while returned it, with some polite General Observations of little Importance—it seems the Gentleman 'had neither Time nor Patience to *decypher* much of it.'

Should Circumstances occur to render it highly probable that your attending a Revision in England would eventually promote Sales in both Countries, or ensure a good Price for the Copy, the Expense incurred by it might be more than compensated. As several Years are still necessary to finish the work, and as Occurrences may in the mean time create Objections or afford Facilities which cannot now be foreseen, the Question, what posterior measures would be advisable may probably be more easily answered at a future Day than at present.

Your Intention to favor me with a Visit next Summer gives me Pleasure. Whether our Lives will be prolonged to that period, time depends on that Good Providence, on which you happily and wisely rely; and whose Beneficence, I hope you will continue to experience.

[Signature cut out.]

Amherst College being now placed on a firm foundation, Webster found his direct exertions

to secure it patronage no longer necessary, for the impulse he had given to the cause of education in that part of the state went sounding on its way, and money and help and students were forthcoming.

On September 19th, 1821, he sent a letter resigning for the second time his seat in the Board of Trustees. His resignation was accepted.[1]

While the work of the *Dictionary* went on in spite of many interruptions from outside affairs, the tide of family life flowed gently and safely along its quiet shores. During Webster's residence in Amherst four of his daughters left him for the homes of their husbands. The fourth daughter, Mary, while on a visit to her sister, Mrs. Cobb, met Horatio Southgate, a lawyer of Portland and a nephew of Webster's old friend and correspondent, Rufus King, who won her hand, though he was a widower with three children. She was the one of all most closely intimate with her father. Mrs. Cobb returned to her father's house, a widow and childless at the age of twenty-one.[2] Mrs. Southgate died at twenty,

[1] See Diary for September 18, 1820, below.—[Ed.]

[2] Mrs. Jones writes of these bereavements: 'Mr. Cobb was a Christian gentleman and a member of Dr. Edward Payson's church, but he was soon called home by his master. My young beautiful sister, after undergoing great anxieties for months, went to the West Indies on a voyage with Mr. Cobb, Senior, her husband and servants, and in one week was childless and a widow. Her father-in-law, herself and her own man servant Neptune, were all taken with yellow fever at Havana. Her father-in-law, an aged and invalid man, was partially

(February 28, 1819,) leaving a daughter three weeks old.[1] This was really the first family bereavement, for though the delicate second son, Henry Bradford, had faded away at the

paralysed, and her servant died. After her recovery, the party crossed to Charleston and returned overland with the feeble and helpless old gentleman, in their own carriage. The journey occupied months, so that she reached Dorchester after a long and weary and responsible absence to find that her little infant daughter Harriet, who could not share the voyage, had died two days before her husband. She insisted on going into the vault where the coffin was resting until the spring, and having the lid removed. Her mother Cobb feared the result of this experiment, but permitted her the visit if she would promise not to raise her veil; as the weather was cold the little creature lay unchanged, with pink cheeks and dark soft hair which had grown after death. (See Appendix XXXII. below.) Harriet spent many months of the year with us in Amherst. Seven years after Mr. Cobb's death she married Rev. William Chauncey Fowler.'

[1] 'The fourth daughter of my Father, Mary, married while he was a resident of Amherst. She was very lovely in character and appearance. She had blue eyes, long dark lashes, and brown hair in large measure. She was fair while the most of us were brunnettes. She was a lover of poetry, always cheerful and hopeful and of so sweet a temper that I cannot recall an instance of petulence or ill humor in that dear sister's life. I remember her unwearied kindness to me and tender love. I was six years younger than Mary and shared her room after the marriage of my three elder, gifted sisters. Mary sang very sweetly, "like an angel" as our old pastor Dr. Parsons would say. In the morning early, as soon as she was awake, she would sing the hymn, "While thee I seek protecting power."

'She would sing every verse and Father was usually in the next room, which was his study and for years after her death his eyes filled with tears when the hymn was sung at church or in the family. "Mary's hymn" he called it. She was a sunbeam everywhere, and open and frank with Father; while the rest of us were often shy in his dignified presence, she gave way to her playfulness and it pleased him. She seemed to understand his nature and to know the deep currant of tenderness concealed at heart and welling up when circumstances overcame the habitual reticence of his manners. He used to read her his Essays and Fourth of July orations. I remember once at the

age of nine weeks and given his parents a most poignant pang of bereavement, it was a far heavier sorrow when this joyous mature being, full of grace and talent, was laid so early to sleep.

dinner table he asked her to come to his study in the afternoon as he wished to read an address he was preparing for some public occasion. She quickly finished her repast and disappeared. She went softly to the study, read what had been written, and had all her criticisms ready and additional suggestions. Of course Father was delighted with her quickness, and when he had shown it by his manner, she confessed the trick she had played upon him. Dear Mary, everybody loved her. She married in her nineteenth year Horatio Southgate of Portland, and died when her little daughter was a few days old. It was our first sorrow. We had learned of Mary's joy a few days before. I remember running from house to house in the village, among Mary's best friends, to tell the good news, for I was but a child then. Then tidings came of her feebleness, of her peace and even joy in the prospect of being with Christ. It was the day of her funeral that this first sad news came, for a terrible snow storm had delayed the mails —blocked all the roads. There were no railroads then—no telegraph. Her home was only in Portland, Maine, but she was laid away before we knew of her danger. She had died on Sunday at twilight and it was Thursday when we began to fear that we must lose her. The sorrow almost overwhelmed my parents. Father opened the letter in our presence, turned pale, rose and left the room. Mother followed, Harriet and myself waited long. They did not return to us. I crept to the bed room door and knocked gently. I heard sobbing and at last opened the door. Father knelt by the side of the bed—Mother close beside him. There was no hope expressed in the letter—they could not reach their best beloved child, one who had never pained them by a word or look in all her short, beautiful life. How could they bear it! We were a changed household after this sore bereavement, but our Father God was with us. Mary was but twenty years of age when she died, and cultured for her years. The Rev. Dr. Payson, her pastor said of her, "If Mrs. Southgate had lived a few more years, she would have developed into one of the most superior of women." So Mary died, my darling sister, and her babe at the age of two years came to my Father's and was his child—another Mary Webster. I was fourteen years of age but many pages of my Father's hidden traits were opened for me then.' (See Appendix XXXIII. below.)

Of the great beauty and charm of Webster's daughters, an old neighbor, Mr. George Montague, who had known them as a lad of Amherst, spoke to the compiler. He said: 'I was very much afraid of them, and I used to watch in corners that I might look at them. They had the sweetest ways with me, a shy lad, whom they would sometimes ask to go up the hill with them, and pick flowers in Mr. Sweetser's grove; and they were full of fun, but full of kindness. I remember them as angels.'

A letter from Mrs. Boltwood of Amherst gives some interesting details of Diana, a servant trained by Mrs. Webster.[1] In older times, the squire's family or the minister's wife often took charge of the few stray waifs then left to the charity of the town, and brought them up with care and kindness. Several of the compiler's maternal ancestry on both sides had singular skill in developing these homeless orphans into admirable serving women, and in one case, the service was so long and unusual, that a tract was written on it called 'The faithful Domestic.' This work of training these children was one of the lesser personal charities of those times, which now from their vastness and number must be organized into systems and executed at second or third or fourth hand. But in the simpler times, almost every family

[1] Sister of Prof. Charles U. Shepard of New Haven, whose cabinet of minerals, unequalled for beauty, was burned down on the College Hill at Amherst in 1880.

of the gentry had some bound dependent whom they were educating for honest duties. At the time of Webster's residence in Amherst, Mr. Lucius Boltwood was the rising young lawyer of the place, and his wife[1] sent the compiler some reminiscences of the family.

There are a few other small particulars of Webster's residence in Amherst which are handed down as traditions among the older inhabitants. One was his dislike of idleness. If he found a lad loitering along the streets, he would say: 'Are you going on an errand?' or: 'Are you needed at home?' and if he found the boy actually idling, he would say: 'Go work in my garden for an hour,' or: 'Pick the stones up from the road in front of my house,' and he would give the itinerant workman a silver ninepence (12½ cents) an hour—a munificent wage for a boy of that period. All the village boys grew fond of him. They would go down on purpose to be hired, for they liked the instruction he would give them about plants and trees, and grafting and budding, and they liked his wages also. Indeed, in money matters, while most scrupulous to avoid debt, and to discharge obligations, he was very liberal.[2]

[1] See Appendix XXXIV. below.

[2] My Aunt Julia [Mrs. Goodrich] told me she had seventeen dresses when she was married, but could not decide in what fashion she wished her wedding dress to be made. It was an Indian Mull trimmed with Mechlin lace, which was very costly then. A part of this she gave me, and I transferred it to her granddaughters, children of Rev. William Goodrich, as a gift. One night she woke up and conceiving a plan, jumped up,

lit a candle, and cut it out herself; this important question off her mind, she went to bed and to sleep again.

She said when her eldest sister was newly betrothed to Mr. Ellsworth he wished to take her to the Junior Ball of the Class (of Yale). She was shy from her recent engagement, and tried to plead off. He persisted in his entreaties, so at four o'clock in the afternoon, she crossed the green to the shops, bought a pink silk and appeared in it as 'lovely as a poet's dream' at eight the same evening. It was made with a breadth in front, a breadth behind, and another breadth cut into two gored breadths at the side. It had drawing strings at the waist and neck, and was trimmed about the low neck and sleeves with fine English lace at twelve dollars a yard.

My aunt Julia also told me how very thinly the ladies at one period were clothed. To wear a flannel underskirt was then as vulgar as it would be now to wear overshoes constantly in the house, and the height of the fashion demanded but one linen undergarment in summer, with a muslin gown over. She confessed to wearing two undergarments to her friend—afterward Mrs. Street, who gave the Art Building to Yale College—and was called to account by her for such prudishness and want of style. Another jotting was that she found a case of poverty, suddenly, in Amherst. There was a child who had no shoes or stockings in winter. She asked her father if she might knit Sunday. 'Certainly my child. It is a work of necessity and mercy.' She sat down after church and knit a pair of stockings for the child. The neighbors wondered, but she said: 'Father was right.'

DIARY.

1811.

January 1811.

Generally moderate weather but wet with very frequent changes. Late in January commenced a series of cold weather with snow, & the beginning of February & indeed most of the month we had good winter weather. Snow about 15 or 18 inches. The harbor of New Haven was closed a week or two only.

March was warmer than usual.

April was a temperate month.

May was dry & cool, June was dry, & cool till about the 20th. when summer weather began. The first week in July was dry, & excessively hot, So that our garden plants withered, even the leaves of maize, in my garden, turned white. But on the 9th we had a copious rain; grass is very light, but wheat & rye, remarkably good.

August was temperate, except a few days of great heat, rain sufficient.

The first week in September very hot. On Tuesday Sept. 10, a most violent Tornado, in Charleston, S Carolina, which blew down houses, killed several persons, & did immense damage.

The first week in Sept. appeared a Comet, it sets in the N N W & rises in N N E. nearly. It was seen at the Cape of Good Hope in May.

Sept. 17, a great eclipse of the Sun. In Virginia, it is annular. Weather very warm.

In July, a hurricane in the West Indies. In May or June,

a great eruption of fire at the Western isles, & an island thrown up.

In the East Indies, at the Cape of Good Hope & in the Atlantic, the Gales of wind have been violent the year past. Spectator. Sept. 21. 1811.

October was remarkable for heat & for gales of wind, for many days about the middle of the month, the heat was very oppressive, & followed by frequent & tremendous winds. On Thursday the 31st. a violent tempest from the E & E S E. brought in the highest tide, which had been see[n] for many years.
See Nov. 1. 1803.

Novr was moderate, & December, till the 24th. when we had a most violent tempest of wind, with snow, & very cold. Before this, there was little frost or snow. In this storm fell about a foot of snow at N Haven, but the wind at North was a hurricane, & accompanied with unusual cold, the thermometer being at 6 above cypher in the middle of the day, & at 2 at night. A great number of vessel[s] driven ashore on Long Island, & many persons perished. The decks & rigging of vessels were covered with ice. This was the day before Christmas. Decr. 26. the theater at Richmond burnt & 75 persons suffocated & burnt.

DIARY.

1812.

January 1812. Generally Cold. On the 19th. a cold storm, the wind not so high on the 24th Ult, nor so much Snow, but it was colder; the thermometer sunk to 7 below cypher.

On the 23 of the month, at about a quarter past nine A M. the weather being calm, an earthquake was felt in New York, on Long Island & in New Haven. It was a gentle waving motion, without any preceding sound, or any jar or concussion. I reeled as I sat in my chair, & at first ascribed it to dizziness. On the 16th. of December, there was a violent earthquake which extended from the State of Ohio, to North & South Carolina, & Georgia, in a south-eastern direction. It was between 2 & 3 o clock A M. An apothecary in New Haven being in his shop, at the time, perceived a little vibration of the vial sticks suspended by strings from the ceiling.

On the 23. of January, another shock was felt in the Southern States, & to [*sic*] Connecticut. It happened at a little after nine o clock A M. I felt as if dizzy, & reeled sensibly, no noise attended or preceeded.

Feb. 7. at 3 or 4 oclock another shock was felt, preceeded by a rumbling sound. It awoke me & others of the family.

February & March were cold, & in the country much snow.

April 13. it Snowed all day, at New Haven. Most of the month cold, & spring late.

May 3. I cut my first Asparagus.

The 4th It snowed all day.

May was cold & mostly wet.

Apple-trees were not in full blossom, till June. 1., a fact I never before knew !

June was generally cooler than usual: as was July, with frequent Showers.

August was mostly cool & very rainy.

July 2. 1812 I sold my house in New Haven, & on the 13th purchased a house & six acres of land in Amherst, Massachusetts. The principal motive of this change of residence, was to enable me to subsist my family at a less expense. I removed the first week in September.

July & August were rainy, & cool.

September was cold but dry. October was cold & dry, so cool a summer is rare; maize did not ripen, & in the country at large there was not half a crop, in high cold land, little or none came to maturity before the frost in September killed it.

November was as cool as usual, & from the first week in September, we had fire in our chimneys almost every day.

December was cold & dry, & we had little snow till Jany 15th 1813.

DIARY.

1813.

January 1813. Cold & dry, the dust flying, till the 15th when a snow fell, sufficient for sledding till middle of March.

April & May rather cooler than usual. Appletrees not in full blossom till May 25, rain sufficient.

June. a few warm days, but mostly cooler than usual.

July. as warm as usual, with plenty of rain.

August & Sept. warm & dry, springs very low.

Oct. Rainy & colder than usual. Crops good. Maize ripened well.

Novr. pleasant, as usual.

December. Dry & cold as usual. Connecticut river closed with ice, 24th. but no snow for sleds till the 29th. of the month.

DIARY.

1814.

January 1814. Winter moderate. Little snow along the Atlantic coast, but in Amherst, good sledding till March.

The last week in April very hot, so the latter part of May, full summer heat at the Election in Boston, where I was attending the general Court. But a long period of cloudy weather, easterly wind & cool weather succeeded. In the country generally great rains in May & June, & violent winds, hail storms, tornadoes unusually violent.

July more wet than usual, but on the whole a good month for hay & harvest, grass good, rye tolerably good, a little blasted, wheat good.

August, & September rainy. A flood in Connecticut river injured the Crops in many places.

Maize ripened well, a tolerably good crop, not so good as last year.

Oct. 5. Extra Session of the Gen[l] Court. The month unusually pleasant. dry & warm.

Nov. Wet & cold, I rode in a sley to Church in Amherst on the 20[th]. but the snow light. & no frost.

Monday Nov 28. 1814. at 10 minutes after 7 oclock P M, in a Calm, moon light evening, there was a slight shock of Earthquake, Persons who were occupied or moving did not perceive it, I was writing in my chamber, & no noise interrupted my observations. The joints of the timber in my house cracked, & there was a shaking for about 5 or 6 seconds.

November & December in general moderate & little snow.

DIARY.

1815.

Jany. 1815 Moderate till the 17th then began to be tempestuous, & several storms of snow followed. The last week very cold, & on the last day the Thermometer fell to 12 below cypher in Boston. It continued to be very cold in Feby, & our harbors were closed with ice.

Some very warm weather early in March dissolved the snow, then followed a cold wet spring. Apple trees in Amherst began to blossom about May 23. I finished planting corn May 24, in fine weather.

June was colder than usual. July was remarkably hot, & August was as unusually cold, heavy gales of wind Augt 8. at sea, & on the American Coast. Sept. 1. severe gales damaged shipping. On Saturday Sept 23. a severe storm of wind & rain from the N E. from 8 o clock A M to 11. The spire & vane of the Steeple in Amherst blown off, & some trees blown down, and some timber & fruit trees, but the principal damage in Hampshire county was the loss of bridges & mills swept away by the water. The destruction of property was immense on the sea shore. The wind was most violent from Connecticut to the District of Maine, & the great destruction of trees shows the utmost vehemence of the wind to be limited to about 70 miles into the interior country. The storm was a proper hurricane, like those experienced in the West Indies—This was succeeded by warm, calm, clear weather.

Autumn was as mild as usual, & crops good.

DIARY.

1816.

Jany. 1816. The winter was open, a snow in January, which was sufficient for sledding was swept away in a few days. the ground was uncovered most of the winter

In May & June the degree of Cold was unusual. We had repeated frosts in May, & after a warm day June 5. & a shower, the wind blew violently from the N W, so cold as to kill the leaves of vine plants. It continued 5 or 6 days, with frost every night, till the 11th day, & on the hills 30 or 40 miles north & West, snow fell several hours. Tender plants were all killed. The maiz in low ground was killed, & on high ground much injured, in Hampshire County.

July very dry, with cold Northerly winds, frost the eighth day, rain the 26th. to wet tilled land a few inches.

August cool & dry, no rain, except a sprinkling, springs & streams very low. frost. 21. & 28.

Sept. dry till the 12th, no second crop of grass. Great rain & flood in southern states, sufficient here to water the plants, but not to fill the Springs, & none in Vermont

Sept. 27. Severe frost, all the Corn killed & so little of the corn hard or ripe, that it is doubtful whether there will be seed for the next year.

Oct. very warm & pleasant till the 17th., then a light rain, followed by squalls of snow, which lies on the hills on the 18th. No rain yet to fill the springs.

Novr & December. Mild & little snow, Cattle grazed till January.

DIARY.

1817.

January 1817. Mild the first week or two, on the 17th a squall with thunder & lightning & rain. In the north, New Hampshire &c the thunder very heavy, & snow at the same time, a church burnt by lightning 23d. Snow sufficient for sledding, a very cold season succeeds. Feby 5. The mercury in Farenheit, fell to 20° below Zero. on the 15th to 25° in Northampton. On the 24th a great tempest with snow. The first week in March, snow two feet deep or more.

The season was dry till June, when the earth was supplied abundantly for the first time since Sept. 23d. 1815. during the hurricane. Weather cool. grass thin & late. Worms of various kinds did much injury, in May & June.

July & August hot. Great rains in August, during harvest & grain injured by growing, but crops good.

Sept. & October warm, as usual. First frost in Hampshire. Oct 1. Maiz ripened well, though late.

Oct. 5. Sunday at noon, a slight earthquake, or trembling, without report, in Hampshire County.

Novem. & December, moderate.

DIARY.

1818.

January 1818, The first part of the month moderate. The latter part & most of February very cold, & good sledding.

March. Early in March warm & a great & sudden flood destroyed a multitude of bridges, among which were those of Sunderland, Springfield & part of that at Hartford, over the Connecticut.

April & May, unusually cold & wet. Spring later than I have ever known. My black cherry blossomed, May 22. 23. & appletrees, May 26. 27.

I planted corn May 25. Then commenced a very hot summer, & extremely dry. The *first* crop of grass was unusually abundant, the second failed. Wheat, rye, oats & barley—were a light crop. Maiz tolerably good, unless in very dry land. Apples very scarce, & other fruits, except pears. The first frost, a light hoar-frost, on the morning of Sept. 24th.

DIARY.

1819.

Jan^{y}. 1819. Winter moderate. Little snow.
Summer very hot & long continued. Crops good, but great drouth in the Southern & western States. A comet. Yellow fever very fatal at Charleston, New Orleans, Natchez. Mobile &c

DIARY.

1820.

January 1820.

Winter began rather earlier than for some years past. Two or three violent storms. In January & February the snow in New England was from three to four feet deep. A few days of *severe* cold, & the cold was continued for about five weeks with little intermission.

August 9. 1820. The Corner Stone of the Collegiate Institution in Amherst was laid by D^r^ Parsons. president of the Board of Trustees of the Academy, & it fell to me to make a short address standing on the Stone.[1]

Sept. 3. 1821 [1820?]. A violent hurricane from the S East. commenced at evening. It prostrated trees & overset some sheds & houses. It was violent at Amherst & as far north as Brattleborough &c but more violent on the Sea Shore from Rhode Island to Norfolk in Virginia. Immense damage done to shipping.

Sept. 18. 1820 [1821?]. Was dedicated the Collegiate Institution in Amherst. First prayer by Rev' Joshua Crosby of Enfield. Sermon by Rev D^r^ Aaron W Leland of Charlestown S Carolina, a native of Peru, in this State. At the same time President Moore & professor Estabrook were inducted into Office; the Ceremony performed by myself, as president of the Board of Trustees. The last Prayer by the Rev^d^ Thomas Snell of North Brookfield. The business of

[1] See *Address* in Bibliography below.—[Ed.]

founding this Institution has been very laborious & perplexing, as we had no funds for erecting the building, & every thing almost was to be collected by begging Contributions. As soon as I was satisfied the Institution was well established by the Induction of Officers, I resigned my seat in the Board of Trustees Sept. 19. 1820, & Dr Moore was elected into the Board & made President.[1]

[1] See Appendix XXXI. below, where Webster gives the date as 1821.—[Ed.]

CHAPTER XIV.

FINAL SETTLEMENT AT NEW HAVEN.

As the *Dictionary* neared completion, his thoughts turned toward New Haven as a place of abode. His lessened family was far less expensive. His *Spelling Book* was becoming more remunerative every year, and he was contemplating a visit to European libraries to consult authorities that could not be found on this side of the water. He wished to bring his family nearer to communication, during his absence, and also to leave them within easier reach of two of the daughters, who now were settled respectively at Hartford and New Haven. For these and other reasons he retraced his steps, and in 1822 resettled in New Haven.

He did not return to the waterside which already had been claimed for wharves and business uses, but chose a lot at the corner of Temple and Grove Streets, where he commenced building a home, in which some of his descendants or their family connection still reside.[1] The little house on the corner of Wall and College Streets, where he spent the first

[1] Written between 1885 and 1892.—[Ed.]

year after his return, was far too cramped for his family, consisting at that time of the parents and four children. The widowed daughter, Mrs. Cobb, had by this time returned to her father's house and made her home with him, and the little grandchild, Mary Southgate, had come to fill the place of her mother. Mrs. Jones writes:

'We watched the progress of the house building with interest all that year, and a glad one was the day when we moved into more commodious quarters, and your mother and myself could have separate rooms, and Father have a nice study and conveniently arrange his books. I remember how we sat in low chairs and sewed our parlor carpets ourselves. Happy Days, sister Julia popping in and out many times each day.'

The first letter we have found after his installation is a circular one [New Haven, September 20, 1822], which shows him as usual with more than one iron in the fire, for he plans to make 'a collection of original Sermons adapted to the use of families & private religious meetings' to 'consist of three, four or more volumes provided a sufficient number of discourses of the character desired can be obtained.'

* * * For the purpose of obtaining the materials of this work, I shall address letters to respectable clergymen in various parts of the country. Will you Dear Sir, contribute a few sermons as a part of these materials. If so, you may be instrumental of [*sic*] promoting the best interests of religion —But I do not solicit *gratuitous* labor. I will pay for each

discourse which shall be admitted into this collection, five dollars in money & give one copy of the volume in which the sermon shall be printed, that is, *one* copy of *each* sermon.

If you can consent Dear Sir, to lend your aid to this object I will thank you to inform me by letter of your compliance with this request and what number of discourses you will furnish; a part of them within three months & the remainder within eighteen months.

Discourses for the purpose here specified should not, I think be very long. Such as can be conveniently read in thirty or thirty-five minutes would be preferred. It may be proper for me to suggest also that any copies that may be transmitted should be written in a fair legible hand, and sent free of expense.

What would the twentieth century worshipper call a 'thirty or thirty-five minute' sermon if not very long?—[Ed.]

As early in the century as 1808 Webster had become impressed with the imperfections in the translation of the Holy Scriptures, and he corresponded in respect of them with Dr. Moses Stuart in 1821.[1]

This Professor of Andover, to whom a manuscript had been submitted, wrote: (23rd April, 1822) 'of our little club' having 'met and gone over the first 25 chap. of Gen. & a number of other places.

* * * 'We owe to you of course to state the grounds of withholding our assent to these [alterations]. It is *not because we believe they*

[1] Not receiving the encouragement he had hoped for, he deferred publishing his translation until 1833. See Bibliography below.—[Ed.]

are not real improvements; for the most part, they undoubtedly are. But then, where shall we stop? Our Review is predicated on the following principles.

'(1) Phrases that are clearly bad grammar, or obscurely arranged, to be changed.

'(2) Words that are now employed *clearly* in a different sense from the old one, to be exchanged, so as to be made intelligible.

'(3) Expressions offensive to modesty to be changed into euphemism.

*** 'We are still of the opinion, that changes within the limits mentioned above may be introduced, without any commotion, or controversy. Beyond this, we believe the feelings, (not to say prejudices,) of the public would not probably admit change, for the present.' [W. MSS.]

The small encouragement received would have daunted the heart of any one less zealous for what he thought essential—a complete revision in the interests both of accuracy and of modesty.

At this time he was also planning an edition of noted English poems which should be carefully expurgated.

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston 20th March 1823

DEAR BROTHER:

After reading with much interest your good letter of 13th. March, as the Post office dates it, I told my wife that I was afraid you was going to lose money by your intended

publication. Her answer was 'My dear, don't throw cold water on any of brother Webster's pious efforts,' and I had intended to obey her; as *she* had always more common sense than *I* have. As I knew that Henry Homes had been engaged on very many occasions to distribute such religious tracts as I know were congenial with your own Christian impressions, I consulted *him* on the subject of your letter. Mr Armstrong, the bookseller, was present. I think that Armstrong said nothing. But Homes observed that a very worthy man of humble circumstances, David Hale, had on hand, or was going to have, an immense edition of a work similar to that which you was preparing. Homes added that *he* had not subscribed for it; because his minister, I suppose Mr Dwight, had told him that it had not been sufficiently purified; but that as the book was already in the market, he, *Homes*, should be grieved by any injury that might be done to Hale by any interference of an editor of the same intentions, tho' more perfect in his expurgations. I use my own words, not Homes's, tho' I express his sentiments. This was on Monday, when in my way to the Probate office. The next day Mr Hale, by Mr Homes's request, called on me. I had never seen him before. I requested him to put on paper the circumstances, and that I would send the communication to you. You can now judge on the subject. It is mortifying that Dryden who composed the 'hind and panther,' should, in the same volume, regale the libidinous with his translations of Theocritus & Lucretius, which I read when at College, and which are vade mecums for a brothel. And Pope is not much better—(January & May from Chaucer). Dr Johnson says nothing of those translations—and, even as to Prior's Hans Carvel, all he observes is 'not over decent.' Yet we all know what a veneration the Dr had for pure morals: His concluding praise of Thomson borrowed from Lytleton is more like himself, 'No line which, dying, he could wish to blot.'

I wish you had started a little earlier, and before the Philadelphia edition had been prepared. Hale shewed me *his* proposals, and they are subscribed to by many of our best men, with what propriety I will not say; but they who have subscribed for fifty volumes may not be willing to subscribe for another edition, tho' a much better one. I am afraid that the poets will not be castrated until Peace Societies beat out War; and *you* know, as well as *I* do, when that is to be. And what is to be done with the Dramatists? There is no end to *them*. Voltaire's 19th letter of [*sic*] the English nation induced me to borrow a volume which contained Wycherley's Comedy, 'the Country wife.' I was amazed at its vicious boldness. It could not be played in Massachusetts without being subject to Indictment. It is worse than a bawdy book, for which its publishers were punished by me in the Municipal Court 3 or 4 years ago. The book had a great circulation. I am afraid that a public proposal of leaving out the fungous parts of a poem may induce many foolish young men to hunt after what has been concealed; like Gay's Cock in the well, 'I had not been in this condition, but for my mother's prohibition.' I hope and trust that you will be directed for what is best for your family & mankind. You see I am crowding my lines. I have written more than I expected. We are glad you have returned to New Haven. I can get to it much easier than to Amherst. And I hope to call on you. And yet I believe I have not been out of Boston for 12 months. I remember the delightful spot where you are building. Tell Becca that my wife is a hearty *old* woman like her 7 sisters. I can assure you that I believe not a week has passed since you went to New Haven without my ruminating to write you; tho' I had nothing special to say.

We were much gratified by M^r^ Goodrich's visit. The death of grandchildren is grievous. But among our consolations there is one in the book of Wisdom 4th 11th. 'Yea, speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness

should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul * * * The Lord hath set him in safety.' I remember, (but not accurately) a note in one of my father's books, the life of president Burr or Edwards, which mentions madam Burr as praying for the life of her *little son*—and my great aunt, M^rs^. Green, prayed that Nat's life might be preserved, and she would ask for nothing more. Nat, after being Lovel's best scholar, was non compos, and I heard his mother say that she sometimes thought her prayer for his life was punished. She was a very pious woman, I can say nothing new to my brother Webster on religious subjects. My wife has read this letter and sends her love to her dearly beloved sister Webster. We are all well here, and have heard no complaints from New Bedford or Quincy or Portsmouth.

BROTHER DAWES.

From the Same. W. MSS.

Boston 27^th^ March 1823

DEAR BROTHER:

I hope to make your valuable letter of 24^th^ inst. useful to the Public; and at a time when it may be most beneficial to *you*. Most of The facts related I *had* known; but I had not sufficiently treasured them in my recollection. I now consider them as on record, & I will do all I can to perpetuate them. To avoid the appearance of egotism, about which you express some bashfulness, I should like to publish it as from an acquaintance of N. W., *knowing* the circumstances. And yet there are difficulties in such a course. For there are some observations of eminent men to yourself, which a third person might not be supposed to know except from N. W. of Newhaven. I wish you to consider whether it would be immodest in *you* or *me* to publish it, plainly, as from N. W. to T. D. As to myself, I should consider myself as honored by such a publication. But I will do nothing of the sort without your permission.

After what Mr Hale wrote, tho' I never saw him but once in my life, and had never heard of him but from my cousin Homes, I should be sorry to have him injured: tho' I know that *your* claims are higher than *his*. I should not subscribe for *his* work, and for the reason that Mr Dwight gave to his parishioner, (besides my *inability*). I need not add that I would subscribe for any & every production of my brother Webster. I should like to have the poets *weeded*: but how it can be done I know not. Some of their best poems (I am not speaking of such men as Cowper) have veins of black in their whitest marble. Virgils 2d Eclogue is a monument of his disgrace: tho I know that Bayle has attempted his defence. It is not worse than many poems written since the administration of Christ. That you may know my meaning, I refer you to the two last lines of the 4th Canto of Pope's Rape of the Lock only as a sample. Now I would ask whether you mean to omit that poem; or whether, if you admit it, you would omit such a couplet? If you go about to alter, the poem is no longer Pope's, but Webster's. I think that Dr Belknap made poor work in his collection of Psalms & Hymns. He has ruined Watts by his *amendments*. Tho' a great historian, he was no poet; and he was so ignorant of the lives of poets, that he has copied some of their best productions, without knowing the names of their authors. I have not a copy of Belknap, except in my *pew*: but I remember he has some celebrated stanzas of Dr Ogilvies, and quotes them as from the 'Rippon collection,' not naming the Doctor, being ignorant that he was their author. I wish you success in your undertakings, as I know they are from the purest motives. We are all well and beg to be rem[em]bered with affection to all yours.

Your brother

Dawes.

From JOHN JAY.[1] W. MSS.

(Copy.) Bedford, 3rd June, 1823.

SIR

I received by the last mail your letter of the 26th Ult. expressing a Desire to receive and publish either in or as an appendix to the History you mention, the Papers respecting the negotiations for the Peace of 1783, or such parts of them as I may think expedient.

Whether the Publication of my official Letters and communications on that subject would be seasonable appears to me questionable.

I have understood that Congress being disposed to publish the letters and communications rec'd from their ministers of foreign Courts during the Revolution, referred the consideration of it to a committee and that after receiving their Report had directed the Papers to be printed, *according* to the *Report*, and a certain number of copies to be sent to each of the States. Whether all, or only some, or particular parts of some of those Papers are to be thus printed I have not heard, nor do I know how far this Information is correct and to be depended upon.

In case it should not be the intention or order of Congress that the *whole* of that correspondence and of those communications should be published, my being instrumental to the publication of any of those parts which they may have concluded to keep secret, would be deemed inconsiderate and improper.

It gives us pleasure to learn from your Letter that you and Mrs. Webster and family enjoy good health. To be favored with another visit from you both would be an agreeable occurrence to my family and to

Your friend and Obedient servant,

[1] My mother's copy is endorsed: 'Rec'd from Hon. John Jay, 1883.'—[Ed.]

From the Same. W. MSS.

(Copy.) Bedford, 22nd Dec. 1823.

Dear Sir[1]

By the last mail, I rec'd your letter of the 12th Inst. informing me that you had made such Progress in your literary work, as that you hope to be able to go to England next summer with a view to give it all the completeness of which it is susceptible, and expressing a desire of Letters of Introduction from me to some gentlemen there.

Feeling an Interest in whatever may be reputable to our country and conduces to your welfare, I sincerely wish your prospects of success may be realised.

It would give me pleasure to facilitate your measures by Letters of Introduction to Gentlemen in England. so many years have elapsed since I left it in 1795 that few of those with whom I had become well acquainted are now alive, and all intercourse by Letters or otherwise between me and those of them, who are yet living has long ceased. I fear that such Letters would be regarded as unauthorized.

The expenses incident to such an undertaking will doubtless be considerable. It may, as you observe, be difficult to provide competent Funds for those and also for the requisite Expenses of your Family, during your absence. I cannot but hope, if this Difficulty should occur, that it may be diminished by the claims which the accomplishment of such an object has to the support of those who are friendly both to the work and to the author. Should those claims become operative, be pleased to let me know it. My son is obliged by your friendly Remark relative to the letters you mention; and unites with me and his sisters in requesting me to present his Compliments to Mrs. Webster. I am Dear Sir,

Your friend and Obed. servant.

[1] See note on p. 117 *ante*.—[Ed.]

From THOMAS DAWES. W. MSS.

Boston, 14th. Febr. 1824

DEAR BROTHER:

My son Appleton will go Southward on Monday, and I will not omit so good an opportunity of expressing the thanks of your brother and sister Dawes for the information he brought us about the health & wellfare of yourself and Beckey and children. Tho' many months have gone by since I wrote you, yet you and your's have very seldom been out of mind. 'Out of sight, out of mind' was never one of my transgressions. I take frequent excursions, in *recollection*, over the numerous places of my earlier visitations, especially the abodes of relatives and friends; and my waking dreams about them are so much like realities, that my children sometimes think, as I suspect, that father is talking to himself. I was gratified that old madam Yale was so just to herself as to append LL. D. to your name.[1] In my copy of your 'letters to a young gentleman,'[2] which I purchased of Armstrong, I added those LL. D. in their proper place. As to that Book, I was much instructed and pleased, as indeed I always have been by your publications. I have no fault to find with your *Seventh* letter; tho' I have not yet been in Heaven, to make me so certain as some men are of many doctrinal points. No writer could have treated the *mysterious* subject better than you have done. But as Christians have differed so much about it, I wish you could have reserved your creed for some work, other than a *school* book. I call it a book for *schools*, because you say that the tenth section is adapted to the use of families & *schools*. Now that section is so large a portion of the volume, that if preceptors or school committees should introduce one part of it, they must another, and there are so many wicked folks

[1] In 1823 Webster received the degree of LL.D. from his Alma Mater. For other degrees, see Appendix XXXV. below.

[2] See Bibliography below.

in Boston, that they might object to its introduction on account of that *seventh* chapter. Its principles do not disturbe *me*, nor my household—The book is, with many others, on my parlor table and read with much pleasure. I rejoice that a man of your uncommon learning and facility of Investigation is not to give up his great Dictionary: but you must feel younger than *I* do to carry the manuscript across the Atlantic; and yet I know that it could not be printed *here* for want of proper types in some of the languages. Mr. Appleton has a *notion*, I hope it is only a Boston one, that your atmosphere is not quite so healthy as that of Amherst. By the way, I believe that Amherst has lost at least *one* advantage by your departure. One such man as you in our General Court would have carried the question in favor of a College; not that I know what would be best, being so far from the intended location and not being acquainted with the subject.[1] I had intended to write you by Dr. Morse, but he had gone before I could muster as much resolution as I am now using. My wife's love to your's.

Yours affectionately,

From William Cranch. W. MSS.

Alexandria D. C. 1. March 1824.

Dear Sir:

I thank you for your kind letter of the 24th. ulto. I have written to Mr. Adams requesting him to forward to you by mail, a letter of introduction to some literary character on the continent of Europe, which I have no doubt he will do.

A prophet is not without honour save in his own country. I have no doubt that your labours will be more justly estimated in England than they have been here. The greatest difficulty will be to make them believe it possible

[1] In regard to the placing of Williams College.—[Ed.]

that any man but an Englishman can obtain a knowledge of the English language. This Country has not given you credit for one half your merit as a literary character, because you have been so unbending to the prejudices of our literary men. If you should go to Europe I shall most sincerely wish you success because I think you deserve it; for I doubt whether any other man in England or America has ever bestowed so much literary labour in analyzing the english language.

The correspondence between our families I hope has not ceased. That it has not been more frequent must probably be in a great measure attributed to my increasing cares, & labours, & anxieties, which by affording less leisure, and depressing my spirits, diminish my ability & my inclination to write. M^rs^. Cranch's domestic employment is so incessant that she only finds time to write now & then to a single correspondent in New England; but I am sure she would be delighted by a letter from M^rs^. Webster, to whom please to present our most affectionate remembrance. We were indeed much afflicted by the loss of our daughter Nancy, whose temper was as sweet and whose spirit as pure as I ever knew. This was soon followed by the death of our daughter Mary, & her child & husband & my friend M^r^. Samuel Eliot—all of whom died in the year 1821,—We truly sympathized with you in the loss of your Mary, & can more truly estimate your loss, since we know she so much resembled our Nancy in manners & appearance. Under these dispensations of Providence we have never murmured or repined. Our own dissolution seems always so near at hand, that as to ourselves, we view the death of friends as only a short seperation [*sic*]; and as to *them*, a release from the cares, the pains & temptations of this scene of trial.

We are all well. M^rs^. C. unites in best affection for M^rs^. W. & yourself, with your

Sincere & affectionate friend,

Webster having now exhausted the resources of all the American libraries of those days, had resolved to study for a time in the greater ones of France and England. He had been arranging his pecuniary affairs with reference to it, and having settled his family in their old and favorite town of New Haven, in a new and commodious house, and as near neighbors to his son-in-law, Professor Goodrich, he was prepared to make this venture. He was a man of such domestic tastes, of such considerate affection and such enlightened judgment, that his family life had often taken precedence even of his philological labors, his home being essentially the center of his hopes and happiness. He had been no enthusiast, dragging his reluctant family into exile. The Amherst life, though bringing some sacrifices in the rupture of the New Haven friendships, had been cordially accepted and made the most of by his family circle. We copy a paper which testifies to the warm affection and identification of his children with his interests:

If one thousand dollars will assist in affording aid to my dearest Father in his contemplated journey to England, he is at liberty to draw this sum in the name of his daughter, with the hope that should he succeed in his wishes, he may at some future time be able to repay it. But if otherwise and Providence should see fit that *disappointment* should be the result of the undertaking, then let this sum be considered as the *free* and *cheerful* gift of an affectionate child.

HARRIET.

Undated, and endorsed by Webster: Harriet's generous offer.

This offer of Mrs. Cobb, who, a widow and childless, wished to share her competence with her father and to assist him in his undertaking, was accepted. Later, when the long struggle was over, the sum was repaid to her. Mrs. Cobb also engaged her friend S. B. F. Morse to paint her father's portrait, which was successfully done.[1]

Webster finally sailed for Europe in June, 1824, taking his only son William, aged twenty-two years. We quote diaries and letters during the separation of the family, giving first, Webster's manuscript

Prayer before sailing for Europe.[2]

We entreat thee, Gracious God, to regard this family, in much mercy, during its approaching separation. May thy servants who are about to depart for a foreign land, be under thy constant guidance & protection. Wherever they may be, wilt thou be on their right hand & on their left, for their defence & their safety. Protect them from all dangers by sea & by land, preserve them from sickness, from sin & from the influence of evil examples. Give them wisdom & prudence to guide them in all situations, & in due time may they return, rejoicing in thy goodness with thankfulness.

[1] This was the original of the frontispiece to the *Dictionary*, and was considered by most of the family as the best ever painted of him. A number of years later he was again painted by Herring, with whiter hair and a fuller face, and about 1840 his bust was made. See Appendix XXXVI. below.

[2] In the possession of the Editor.

And may this family be the special care of thy kind protecting providence. Wilt thou watch over it & all its interests. Preserve all its members in safety. May our hearts be knit together in love to each other, & may we all live in nearness to God, & enjoy the consolations of thy Grace.

Most gracious God, we commit our way to thee, trusting ourselves & all our interests, spiritual & temporal, to thy mercy in Jesus Christ.

From NOAH WEBSTER. W. MSS.

At Sea.

We sailed from New York June 15. at about 11 oclock A M. with a fair wind at N W. The wind was light; but continued fair during that & the two following days, by which means we made a good offing.

Our company, consisting of bipeds & quadrupeds, is as follows—about 12 dozens of gallinaceous fowls, a dozen ducks, & about as many turkeys, half a dozen geese, about as many pigs, & sheep, a goat & three kids, one parrot, named Jaco, & a mongrel canary bird. Three French Ladies, with one female servant, one English Colonel from Canada, an English Gentleman & Lady, with their son & a female servant. Eight or ten Frenchmen, three or four Americans, one German, one Swede, &c. Twenty one Passengers. The captain, crew & waiters, about twenty in numbers.

On Friday, the 18th, when in the Gulf-stream, we encountered a severe gale from the N E which compelled us to lie to under a trysail or spenser, the whole day. This was to me a new scene, & extremely interesting. No person, who has not been an eye-witness, can have an adequate idea of the awful grandeur of a tempest at sea. To see the ocean rolling in mountains, foaming & roaring, & the wind howling, is a scene that may well appall the stoutest heart.

The gale commenced at night, but the ship carried sail & laid her course till morning, when all sail was taken in, except a small sail necessary in lying to. Early in the morning I went to the door of the gangway to look out, & suddenly a sea rose & dashed over the ship's quarter & washed her decks. Fortunately nothing was lost & no injury done, I escaped with a slight sprinkling. I then returned to the cabin & remained snug the whole day, except that I went above two or three times to view the scene. With all the tossing & tumbling, my stomach was not in the least disturbed. I felt some apprehension, as it was a new scene to me & the ship was new. Before night as I found by the opinion of the Captain & others, that the ship proved what is called an excellent sea boat, & was easily managed in lying to, my apprehensions were in some measure allayed.

William was sea-sick & lay in his birth all day, except that on my suggestion, he once went above to look at the sea. He returned & barely said 'I had no idea of this.'

Before morning on Saturday, the gale abated & we made sail, with a rolling sea—the wind moderate at N. E. On Sunday we had a calm, most of the day. On Monday the 21st the wind was moderate at S E., & so it continued on Tuesday.

I would not forget to mention, that in the midst of the storm we had a little comfort from the bird in the cage. This bird was suspended in the round house over the gangway & safe from the wind, and amidst the roaring of the sea & the agitation of the ship, we were several times cheered with the notes of the little songster. This bird, the monkey & the kid, (for *one* only is spared from slaughter) serve to amuse the company, during the dull uniformity of the voyage. Indeed we have a great variety of music & discords. The squealing of the pigs, the bleating of the sheep & goats, the crowing of the cocks, & the squalling of the Englishman's child, alternately or jointly

salute our ears. These with the jabbering of the Frenchmen & with their cramming & vomiting, give us no little amusement.

We are well furnished with eatables & drinkables. We usually have on table at dinner veal or mutton, pork & two or three kinds of fowls. Our last dish is a plum pudding or rice pudding, or apple-pie—yes *apple pie* in the midst of the Atlantic! Our delicate consists of raisins, prunes, figs, almonds, occasionally oranges & pine apples, & preserved peaches. Morning & evening we have tea & coffee sometimes a little goats milk, but the mischief is, the little squalling boy wants most of that.

We observe very genteel hours—breakfast at nine, dine at three, & sup at 8 or 9. & we have a great deal of time for eating & sleeping. But, as you may suppose, there is little or no appearance of religion among the passengers. They make no difference between Sunday & other days, playing cards equally on both. In other respects they are agreeable enough.

Madam de la rue (not Beaumarchais, but her daughter) is somewhat affected with sea-sickness, or she pretends to be so. She remains in her state-room till afternoon, & then is conducted to the deck, where she lies on pillows in a settee, till night.

Monday July 5th. We have had a few days of warm weather & fresh breezes from the South West, but yesterday we were headed by the wind, it rained & kept us in the Cabin. To day we have a moderate wind at N W. but we have 500 miles yet to sail. For two or three days, it has been so cool that I can wear a surtout with comfort. We see little to amuse us, once in a while, a grampus, a school of porpesses, or a flight of Mother Carey's Chickens. We have seen only two whales—& only *their* back fins.

We found soundings on the Sole Bank, in 21 days, from New York. We entered the English Channel in the night & in thick foggy weather & saw no land till we espied the

isle of Wight, on the evening of the 9th July. We lay all that day becalmed, the fog cleared away at evening & a breeze sprung up which wafted us into Havre on the morning of the 10th. We entered the dock at half past 8— 25 days from N York.

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Newhaven June 23d [1824]

My dear Husband

I am now sitting in your study, & as it is [a] rainy day have a prospect of a few hours uninterrupted leisure. A comfortable thought, for since you left us, our knocker has been in constant exercise. Most of our friends have call'd & have manifested the kindest sympathy, but my heart is too heavy at present to enjoy society, I have need of *quiet* & *retirement*, & sigh to be alone; Yet I am not insensible to the kindness of our friends, tho I could willingly dispense with so much attention from them.

We were all highly gratified in receiving a line from yourself & William, by the return of the Pilot boat, to know that your cold had abated & your spirits [were] good. May the Divine presence & blessing attend you both while on the voyage & thro' the journey of life & our Almighty Friend and Father guide & guard you.

Last friday, your Cousin Marshfield Steel[e], with his eldest daughter arrived here. Mr Steele was greatly disappointed when he heard you had sail d. He is still with us, & we are delighted & edified with the piety of his Conversation. I never met with a Character possess'd of more genuine Godly simplicity. And if the 'effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much'—a blessing will descend, & rest on my dear Husband, & Son, & they will be abundantly prosperd in their voyage, & restored to their Country & friends in saf[e]ty. My heart & the hearts of all your Children respond *an Amen* to the prayers of your

pious kinsman. Eliza Steel[e] is less interesting than her Father but a very good girl, delighted with the new World around her; the Churches, Colleges, burying ground &c. &c. They leave us tomorrow for Hartford. Yesterday I receiv d a letter from M^r^ Ellsworth His health is better, & Emily is so well that she walks thro her chambers & will come below soon; the infant is well; weighd at its birth 10 pound ¾; black eyes—they talk of calling her Rebecca, but I shall *protest* against it, lest she shou'd not love her grandmother. Our dividend is not yet sent, but I have written M^r^ E. on the subject & he will probably sent [*sic*] it soon, *if he does not forget.* M^r^ Atwater brought a large load of wood to-day, it looks well. The remainder will come in august & then I shall settle for the whole.

Harriet's Piana arriv d in good order, & those who are Judges pronounce it a fine instrument. Martha Denison is playing on it at this very moment, so *sweetly*, that I can hardly sit still & write. M^r^ Steel[e] & Eliza, & all the family, including little black Ellen, are standing round *enraptured.* Harriet took her first lesson today from Miss Salter.

Sophronia left us last week & we have not yet supplied her place, we hope to procure a girl soon. We find Ellen very prompt & handy to go on errands. Louisa is standing by me, I ask'd her what I shall say to Papa for her—O tell dear Papa & *brother* that I want to see them, that I've very *fectionate feelings*, & help Mama all I can, & that I am very *interesting.* Dear little Mary weept very much at your departure, probably because she saw others affected, but Julia took her home to play with Chauncey, & she was soon pacified. M^r^ G, & Julia send love, they will not write by this oppertunity. Mary D. & Eliza intend to write William. M^r^ Russel has accepted the call & gone with his family to Newark. M^r^ Chace supply d our Pulpit the last Sabbath. M^r^ Steel[e] offers his kind regards & best wishes for your prosperity, health & happiness. I have said nothing respecting my own state of health, it is better on

some accounts. I am taking Quassa root made into Tea & think that I have derivd some benefit from it as a strengthener. With kindest love to William believe me ever, dearest husband,

Your affect^ate^ wife,

June 26^th^ I received an order for my money to-day M^r^ Ellsworth & Emily quite well. Julia is gone to Hartford with her two children Eliza has spraind her hand so that I fear she will not be able to write William, if so she will write the next oppertunity. We are all in comfortable health.

From Harriet Webster Cobb. W. MSS.

(On the same sheet.)

Wednesday Morning 24^th^. [1824]

After giving you the farewell kiss my dear Father, & brother I remained in the cabin until all my tears were dry'd away after which I sought my friends on deck, & pass'd a pleasant day in their society—altho now & then the idea that I had parted for many long weeks & months from you & William would rise up & cast a shade of sadness upon every cheerful feeling. But I feel a sweet pleasure in giving you both up to God, and one of the most pleasant and delightful feelings of my heart is when I am committing you into the hands of Him who rules the winds, and waves, & who can protect you on the mighty waters, guide you to a haven of safety, & keep you ever in His watchful care. Dearest Father, may your life be prolonged by this voyage, your health & strength renewed & in due time may you come back crown'd with the [torn] kindness of that Being who in all our troubles has [not] forsaken us. Yesterday I took tea with Mrs. Deacon Whitey [Whitney?]. Many enquiries were made for you; to day go to Mrs. Sillimans. Newhaven in the summer season is *visiting mad* and I am trying to convince Mother that it is her duty to

visit occasionally. Hope I shall prevail upon her to go. Mr Jones call'd last evening & told us of you, we were happy at this intelligence, later than any we had received.

Our friends are very kind in calling, & Mrs. Dennison has a long letter written for William, tho I hardly know whether she will consent to send it, as she is fearful of his criticisms. Martha comes often to enliven us with her notes.

No deaths have occurred recently except that of Capt Stilwell.

I will close my dear Father & brother with many wishes for your health & happiness.

Yours,

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Havre du Grace July 10. 1824

My dearest Becca,

By the favor of divine Providence, I arrived here safely & in good health, this morning. The inclosed paper, written chiefly at sea will give you some details of the voyage. We had a fair wind, or nearly fair, every day except three—one, a gale & two calm. We have been exposed to no particular danger, & the passage is considered as a good one, a *pleasant* one, it could not be to me, any passage by water, is to me extremely unpleasant. But I have enjoyed good health, & am so tanned that I look like a Spaniard. I am now writing in the Havre Hotel, but what a contrast a hotel here exhibits to one in America. The bed looks decent, & is well covered with Curtains, but the table & other cabinet work is of walnut or other hard wood, I know not what, but it looks old, & of a dun color, like such as our grandmothers used. The chairs are of like wood & bottommed with bark or straw. The floor of our rooms, like all floors & stairs in this town (in Paris also, it is said) are formed of bricks. These are of different shapes in different floors. They will hardly do

in summer, & what must they be in winter, *to the feet?* The houses are usually four or five stories high, of stone or brick, or of wood covered with tiles on the sides as well as roof[s]. The tiles look so much like shingles set up & down that I at first thought them shingles put on as they are in Fairfield. The streets are narrow, paved with stones nearly square & flat, with the gutter in the middle. This town looks old, though it is not old for Europe, but in neatness, convenience & beauty bears no comparison with any of our towns & cities in America.

I have called on Mr Green, of the house of Wells & Green from Boston. Mr Green has been polite enough to introduce me to the Consul, Mr Beasley, who is to furnish me with passports for Paris. I understand the Marquis La Fayette is to proceed to America, in the *Cadmus*, the ship that will bear this letter, & will be in town on Monday or Tuesday next, & it is probable I shall remain here, till Wednesday, & then proceed to Rouen, halfway to Paris, in the Steam-boat, then by land to Paris.

The weather here, I am told, has been very wet. So at sea, it rained or was misty & foggy all the passage, & so cold that worsted stockings & a surtout were comfortable, half the time. The weather is now fine.

William was sea sick half the passage & grew quite thin; he is now well, except a cold, which I suppose he has taken from sitting on deck in thin clothing, after coming near land.

We spoke one brig on the passage, & the captain was requested to report our ship, so that I hope you will hear of our being safe, 14 days out. If not, this letter will probably be the first to inform you of our arrival, & as the winds are westerly at this season, I am afraid you will be very anxious about us, before you hear. To insure information to you, I shall write a short letter by the next ship. William also writes.

My bill of Exchange is accepted, so that No. 2 & 3 are of no use.

I cannot endure most of the dishes of French Cookery, but I generally find something that I can eat, & I have not yet lost a meal.

I have written a letter to Harriet, which I shall send by the ship Don Quixote.

I understand that letters by ships go directly to the post office, & pass to Paris or other place[s], without examination. So that it is not necessary they should be directed to the care of any person in Havre. Any package for me, other than letters, may be directed to the care of Wells & Green, Merchants.

I am anxious to hear from you, & the more so on account of your low state of health. You & my dear family are constantly on my mind, & always remembered in my prayers. My love to them all & may that God who has hitherto protected us still be our protector & our guide.

Most affectionately yours,

Love & respects to Temple Street, & all friends.

To Harriet Webster Cobb. W. MSS.

Havre. July 12. 1824

My dear Harriet,

By the favor of a kind Providence I am on land, in France, after a passage of 25 days, in which I suffered no inconveniences, except what are incident to such a voyage. During a severe Gale on Friday the 18th of June, I suffered some anxiety, but my health has been & continues to be good. William was sea-sick half the passage, & ate nothing, but he is now making up lost time. I have written a more particular account of the voyage to your mother by the *Cadmus*. This letter I shall send by the *Don Quixote*, another ship, & I sincerely hope that at least one of the ships may have a short passage, to relieve our friends from anxiety. My bill of Exchange No. 1 is accepted so that No's 2 & 3 are of no use.

I shall stay here two or three days—expecting to see the Marquis La Fayette, who is to embark for America in the *Cadmus*—then proceed to Paris, where I shall write letters, to be conveyed to America by the Edward Quesnel which will sail Aug^t. 1. Capt. Hawkins is a very obliging man, & will take any letters or parcels for me with pleasure. The lines of Packets from New York to Havre establish a regular communication, & afford two conveyances, every month. I hope to hear from some of the family by every conveyance. I am now particularly anxious, on account of the state of your mother's health, & that of M^r Ellsworth & Emily.

It is now past nine o'clock A M. & not yet breakfast time, which is at *ten*, & dinner at 5 P M. These are new times for me. I find however no great inconvenience from this circumstance. The French cookery is to me very disagreeable, but when I get to Paris, settled, I will have food that I like. I believe the people of this town, who may be fifteen or twenty thousand, are generally poor, though there appears to be considerable trade. I have walked through the market, & it is to me a great curiosity, & thousand things, fish, vegetables & artificial things for food, for which I have no name. The market women sit bare-headed, some of them wear leather shoes, others clank about [in] their wooden shoes, with surprizing ease. But the lower classes of people are a motley crew. The military have various uniform[s], & nothing very particular, except the whiskers of some of the Companies, particularly the Swiss, which give them a most ferocious aspect.

The Church in Rue de Paris is near my lodgings. I stepped in to see the congregation in time of service on Sunday. A large proportion consisted of females, sitting mostly in chairs & apparently very devout. The music was indifferent—there appearing to be only a single voice. The service read by the priest, I could not hear. At twelve o'clock, the ordinary service ended, & a service or mass for the military commenced. The military marched into the

main aisle with drums beating, after a while a little bell jingled & the military music began—it was soft & pleasing, when this was ended, the bell again gave notice, & the military who were standing in the aisle, came to an order & fell on one knee or bowed—all the Congregation either kneeled or bowed—some of them very low, & continued some time in this position, the drums playing all the while. I presume there was a ceremony, at this time, which I did not see. We had then more music, & the service closed by some reading or praying of the priest, I could not tell which, all this is to me new and *strange.*

The females here, for the most part, wear no hats or bonnets; these I suppose are the common people; a few wear leghorns—much in the shape of those worn in America —but all old & young wear caps. It looks odd to see the streets full of females, many of them [torn] well dressed, going to church without [hats] bonnets or umbrellas. The men dress much as in America.

The markets & shops are open on the Sabbath, but carting & the more noisy business is laid aside.

I shall expect you, my dear Harriet, to write me often. Tell me all the great & little events that can be interesting to me. When you write to Portland, present my affectionate respects to your friends.

Your Cordially affectionate
Father,

My kindest love to your sisters, & to all friends.

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Havre July 13. 1824

My dearest Becca,

I have written you at large by the ship Cadmus, Capt. Allyn, which has just left the dock, with the Marquis La Fayette on board. But the ship Don Quixote, which will convey this letter, is a better sailer, than the Cadmus & may arrive first at New York.

I have been disappointed in not having an interview with the Marquis. Yesterday morning Mr Beasley, the American Consul, wrote me a polite note, with the request of Mr Phillipon, at whose house the Marquis was to lodge, to spend the evening with him. Mr Beasley & other Gentlemen went out to meet the Marquis. But between nine & ten at night, Mr Beasley's clerk called to inform me, that the Marquis had not arrived; so that I retired to rest. This was a disappointment to me & to William too, who had his boots well cleaned for the occasion. In half an hour after the Marquis arrived.

This morning, the people collected in crowds about the wharf & there was such a bustle with the troops who were ordered to the place to prevent disturbance, that I could barely get a sight of the Marquis, as he left his carriage & entered the steam boat, to go down to the ship below. I have been told that the Government retarded the journey of the Marquis by throwing difficulties in his way, in the procuring of conveyances, with a view to prevent the people from honoring him with escorts &c. I am told also that the officers of government were very particular in searching his baggage, papers &c He is now in the declining party, & the government is very jealous of him. The Royalists are gaining the ascendancy.

I have nothing in particular to add to what I have before written. I expect to leave this place to-morrow. May the blessing of heaven attend you & all my dear children & their connections.

Affectionately yours,

To the Same. W. MSS.

Paris July 21. 1824

My dear Becca & all my dear family,

I arrived here last saturday evening in very good health. I left Havre on thursday & passed up the Seine

to Rouen in a steam boat. The day was not altogether pleasant, it sometimes rained, but we had generally very fine views of the adjacent country, & I believe no country can furnish richer scenery. The distance, owing to the windings of the river, is 70 or 80 miles, though little more than *half* that distance by land. We passed many villages on the banks, & here & there a chateau in ruins. The houses resemble nothing in America unless it is some of the old Dutch buildings in Albany. They are built of stone or more generally of timber, with mortar filled in between the posts & studs, & all the roofs are sharp, & covered with thatch or straw, laid on ten or twelve inches thick. Most of the common houses are of one story only, in the Country—in the villages, many of them are two or three stories. I have not yet seen a shingle or clapboard in France, & no board Covering for houses.

We arrived at Rouen about sunset, & as soon as we reached the shore, an officer came on board & searched our trunks. As they were searched at the Custom House in Havre, I supposed I was not subject to a second search, but I was mistaken. The search was however very slight. Rouen is a large town, containing, probably a hundred thousand inhabitants, though I do not know that the number is ascertained. It is a very old town, & its streets very narrow, many of them not more than ten feet wide, & some of them only six, & the houses generally four or five stories high. In many of the streets, the throng of people passing & repassing renders it difficult to walk with any comfort. Here is one of the most stupendous Gothic cathedrals in France. It is immensely large, built of stone, parts of which are decomposed or worn away by the rains of many centuries. I ascended one of the towers about 150 feet, but my strength failed & I could not reach the top. I however obtained a pretty good view of the town. William ascended to the top.

I had a letter of Introduction from LeRoy, Bayard & Co.

to Mr Edward Quesnel of Rouen, the Gentleman after whom the ship is called. His wife was in the country, but he gave me an elegant dinner, & I found him uncommonly polite & agreeable. I remained one day only in Rouen, & on Saturday took a seat in a *Diligence* for Paris. This is such a thing as was never seen in America. It contains three apartments, that in front will carry four persons, the middle apartment, 6, & that behind, 4. On the top, is carried the baggage, perhaps half a ton or more, & a number of passengers. The vehicle is ten or twelve feet high, & looks as much like a Dutch hay rick as it does like a coach. It is drawn by four, five or six horses, three abreast, the driver or postilion rides one of them, & wears a pair of jack-boots which come above his knees, as in the days of Henry 7 [*sic*]. We had in our division of the carriage, a French Doctor, & two English ladies, one of them carrying a lap dog, for *my comfort*, but he was very quiet. We arrived in Paris, in the dusk of the evening, & immediately an officer appeared to search our baggage. William opened his trunk, but the man politely said he was satisfied, & let me pass unmolested. We took lodgings at the Hotel Montmorency, No. 12, St. Marc, where we remained till yesterday. I have taken lodgings for the present at No 19, Rue Bergère, near the Boulevards at the house of a Madame Rivière, who was several years in America, in Chancelor Livingstone's family &c. Our accommodations are not so good as I wish, the two rooms being small, only about 12 feet square, but I cannot afford the price of large apartments, & hope to make these rooms answer my purpose. I pay for board & lodging not quite 70 dollars a month, for both of us, which is considered here as a low price. Mrs Rivière is obliging enough to cook to my liking, as far as she can. Today she had an excellent piece of beef roasted *a l'Americaine*, without onions or garlic, & really I seemed to be at home, but to wind up, we had a *plum-pudding*—I believe the *first* her cook ever made, but

it was very good. The French usually make their breakfast of bread & wine, & wine is their common drink at dinner, & even at supper, but I get good tea & *very good* coffee, such as I do not get anywhere except in France. The French make good butter, but put no salt in it, & hence I eat little. It is brought on table, sometimes in a dish of water, at others, on a plate in wafers about double the size of a dollar.

We have good beds, but I believe the upper sheet is so large as to double down to the foot of the bed & cover the whole blanket. The bolster is rolled into the head of the under sheet & the pillow is two feet square, or rather more.

I have taken one ride over one of the bridges, & had a view of the magnificent statue of Henry the Great, & once have I walked through the gardens of the Palais Royale, the Tuilerie & the place Vendome. The Palace was once elegant, but the stone composing the walls has an appearance of age & all its beauty of color is gone. The gardens, walks &c are fine.

I went to see M^r^ Hillhouse, but did not find him at home. I have however received a note from him.

I went yesterday, with D^r^ Brown,[1] brother of our minister plenipotentiary,[2] to see the Royal Library, & I cannot give you a description of my feelings. To have an adequate idea of this collection of books, you must imagine rows of shelves 30 feet high, extending from the corner of my house to the Green, or public square. If there is any exaggeration in this representation, there is not much.

I find several Americans here; & last evening I sat a half hour with M^r^ Brown, the American minister & M^r^ Sheldon. M^rs^ Brown is very sociable. I have succeeded in finding some of the Gentlemen to whom I had letters, but one gentleman to whom M^r^ Silliman[3] sent letters & a specimen of fossils, is in the Country. To-day M^r^ Warden,

[1] Samuel Brown. [2] James Brown, of Louisiana.
[3] Benjamin Silliman.

our former Consul, called on me, & offered to introduce me to the Gentlemen of the Institute. I suppose I must, some time before long, make my bow to them.

Paris is a little world; the Streets are however not so narrow as I had supposed. Many of them are conveniently wide. Others of them are certainly too narrow, but not so narrow as in Havre & Rouen. The houses are of a whitish or cream-colored stone, which looks well when new, usually 5 stories high. The Wealthy inhabitants have an excellent practice of renting their front-buildings & erecting their houses behind, forming a square Court, where they are free from the noise of carriages.

July 23. I have this day been to see the Chamber of Deputies. There were not more than 70 members present, & no important business was transacted. The members look better than the Country members of Massachusetts & Connecticut, as to dress, but not better than the more gentleman-ly part of our legislatures. Their Room is little more than a semi-circle. The seats circular & handsome, the floor well carpeted. The Speaker's & clerk's seats &c are in a kind of niche or arch on the side facing the circle. The room is lighted by a semi-circular skylight—six statues adorn the wall—three on each side of the Speaker or president in niches. I saw nothing of dignity in the proceedings of the house. The members were talking most of the time, & less order was observed than in the house of Representatives in Connecticut.

The Column in the place Vendome is more than 100 feet high, I should suppose, & from 8 to 10 feet diameter at the base. The exterior of it is of bronze, all made of the Cannon which Buonaparte took from the Austrians & other nations. It is divided spirally into partitions & all covered with representations of battles. Originally, this was crowned with a statue of Buonaparte, but this has been removed. Nothing remains to remind the Parisians of his greatness.

When at the Chamber of Deputies, we visited the Hall

of Audience or Council Chamber, where we saw most elegant portraits of the present King & his relations. The Duchess of Angouleme has a bad face, & the most ugly eyes I ever saw. The King is a fat good-looking man, he is now at St Cloud.[1] The throne is an armed chair, not very handsome in shape, but covered with cloth & gilt with gold, as is the cushion. It is raised 4 or 5 inches above the floor, & stands at one end of the room, which is a parallelogram, or square, I do not recollect which, & the floor, like all other handsome floors in this country is of a dark color, like black walnut. I have not seen a carpet on a floor, except in the chamber of deputies.

I have called at the post-office, to leave directions to have letters addressed to me, to be sent to Wells & Co., & I wish my friends in America would hereafter address letters to me, at Paris, to the Care of that house, as they act as my bankers & are well known.

You may easily imagine how much I want to hear from home. I hope a few days now will relieve me. Tell Louisa, if she could be here, she would see *trainers* to full satisfaction. Every town has numerous guards of soldiers, *gens d'armes*. We meet them at every corner, & especially about the public buildings. But I am tired of description. Let me know, my dearest wife & children, how all things are at home. To know that you are well & happy will make me happy too.

Mr S. Goodrich has left us this day for England.

Sunday, July 25: This is not a day of *rest* in France, at least not universally. Before my eyes now, the masons are at work on the walls of a new house & I am within the sound of the hammer, the adze or other instruments. Some shops are shut, but others not. Little regard is had to the Sabbath, the Catholics generally have no bibles, & the Sabbath is a day of amusement for the rich & the gay. The theaters are open every night, & one of the greatest

[1] Lewis XVIII.

inconveniences I experience is the noise of carriages at the breaking up of plays, about 12 at night. I must submit to be thus annoyed at present in every way imaginable, but I think these things may shorten my stay in France.

Mr Dwight & Mr Chauncey have not returned from Italy, at least they are not here.

With the tenderest affection for you, for the children & all our connections & friends.

P S. I would write separate letters to all my children if I had not so much other labor of that sort. But I suppose all my children & friends will see my letters, & they will excuse me.

From Augustus L. Hillhouse.[1] W. MSS.

[Paris]

Mr Hillhouse hastens to pay his respects to Mr Webster —a slight indisposition, an incommodity not an illness, that has confined him for a week past, will prevent his calling on him for some days. He takes ye liberty of sending him an introduction to Mr Warden,[2] who far more than himself, & more than any man in Paris, can aid his wishes, & by procuring him immediate access to ye objects of his search, spare him ye irreparable loss of time.

Mr Webster wishes to discover a place of entertainment, where he may be treated with English cookery :—at *little Garroway's* beefsteak house in ye *rue Vivienne*, near ye Hotel where he now lodges, he may feed *Anglicé* on plain meat & ale.

Monday evening.[3]

[1] Augustus L. Hillhouse, born in New Haven, 1791, died in Paris, 1859. Son of James Hillhouse, the federalist.—[Ed.]

[2] David B. Warden, United States Consul at Paris for forty years.—[Ed.]

[3] To David Bailey Warden. W. MSS.
[Paris]

Dear Sir :

Allow me to commend to your friendship & good offices our learned countryman, Mr Noah Webster, with whose name

From HARRIET WEBSTER COBB. W. MSS.

Saturday, 24th July. [1824]

We have just risen from the dinner table, our little family all dispersed as usual, and I have retired to my chamber, drawn my table with my writing desk near the window and seated myself alone and very comfortably to write my dearest Father and only Brother, and I cannot employ this sultry oppressive afternoon more pleasantly. How much I wish to be seated by you, to see you, to hear you & tell you a thousand things, which when placed on paper, the relation of them will seem trifling. How I wish I knew all who surrounded you, all who are contributing to your comfort & happiness in a distant land! We are counting the days, when in all probability we shall see your hand writing & hear of your welfare, then my dearest parent & brother, we shall sleep sweetly. Gratitude & peace will fill our hearts & we shall go on more cheerfully & lightly in the path of duty.

It gives me pleasure to tell you that Mother is improving in health daily ever since her little visit to Emily, & if we hear you are comfortably established we shall hope to spend a pleasant winter. Eliza is with Emily where she will remain some weeks. New Haven is very lively the present Summer, a great many strangers, & a great deal of visiting. As yet we have had no company, but have lived as much for ourselves as possible. Mrs. Dennison & her daughters were

& reputation I presume you are familiar. He visits Europe to put ye finishing hand to an immense Philological labour; & by facilitating his access to ye sources of information, you will not only confer an individual favour but promote ye cause of learning itself. I venture to assure you, my dear Sir, that any pains you may take to oblige Mr Webster, will meet with a very different return from that, wh, in some instances, has wounded your feelings, without affecting ye urbanity of your manners or ye kindness of your disposition.

Your most obedt
& most humble Servt,

Monday.

with us last evening. Martha played to us all the evening most sweetly. I told them of writing to you, & they desired most kind remembrance. Betsey Whittlesey & Mr. Taylor threaten to write you & I know a *Becca Nine* letter would be acceptable. Your picture my honored Father looks graver & more pensive. I rather think you are a little homesick which gives this peculiar expression to your face, and the other day after being very rude in the drawing room by way of amusement to dear Mother, I happen'd to look round, not feeling your presence till that moment, when with all due humility I curtisied & begg'd pardon for the *disrespect* I had shown you. I imagined you look'd stern, & am pretty sure one corner of your terrific eyebrows, hitched a little by way of displeasure, & then soon became smooth, expressive of forgiveness. I progress a little in my music, but find it at first something of a study & often rise from the piano in a perspiration, but I will learn to play before you come, so never fear.

Farewell dear friends,

Yours affectionately,

COBBY.

From REBECCA GREENLEAF WEBSTER. W. MSS.

(On the same sheet.) [About July 30th 1824]

MY DEAR HUSBAND

The present month is drawing to a close & it is time to send our letters on to New York. I hope you have received my first letter, written a fortnight after you left us. The last package was forwarded by Eliza to William while I was in Hartford, where I passed ten days very pleasantly & found on my return that every thing had been managed with propriety & all the dear circle in both families well. I returned with Mr Fle[t]cher in Mr Ellsworth's carriage & Eliza accompanied him back. Mr E. & Emily are in good health, the babe (a very fine Child) is named Elisabeth. She promises to be a Webster in *feature* tho' an Ellsworth in

form. My health & spirits are evidently improving, appetite better & I gain strength. I now begin to indulge the hope of soon hearing from a beloved husband & son, as 6 weeks have already elaps'd since you left us.

I am often led to smile at the question which is hourly made When did you hear from Mr W?. Temple Street is all alive. Tea parties in honor of Mrs Converse. We have not attended one of them yet, & we do not mean to compliment the bride till we hear 'good news from a far Country.'

I wish you could take a peep at us, the present moment, Monday mornig Adeline & Louisa at their usual employment, Mary sitting on the carpet by my side studying her sabbath lesson for the next week (12 verses). She has committed them so perfectly hitherto, that her Teacher has had no occasion to prompt her. Harriet is drilling at her music. She plays 6 tunes *very Comfortably.* Our garden yields us excellent vegetables, beets, potatoes, peas, & beans, but the corn was planted so thickly that it will come to nothing. I examined it to-day, & saw but two ears on the early corn, the later will yield better, not much however; this will be a disappointment to us all.

Our vines look remarkable well & the raspberries have afforded at least 3 quarts for a beginning. Lewis comes every week to see if I want his services & he keeps the garden in good order. Professor Stuart pass'd several days in N. h. but did not call to see us—*I shall remember it.*

We have no prospect of a settled minister. Mr. Bigelow from Eastport (Maine) supplys our pulpit, a very moderate man. And now my dear Husband, I have a little domestic news for you in which we are all interested.

Marriage is intended between William C. Fowler[1] &

[1] Rev. William Chauncey Fowler, only son of Reuben Rose Fowler and Catherine Worthington Fowler. Through his maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Chauncey Worthington, he

Harriet W. C., all things are settled between the parties provided you approve. I give you this information at the request of H. who says the wedding will not take place till you return. Mr F. is preaching *now* at Lebanon, *when* or *where* he will be settled is uncertain. Harriet's health & spirits are good, Eliza very feeble, her head is not so much affected as it was last summer, but her stomach more so. I hope a change of air, & scene will benefit her & that she will stay with Emily through the hot season. Mr G. & Julia send love, Louisa is a very good girl talks a great deal about Papa & dear brother William. Everything goes on in the usual train, & we do without you as *well* as we can, & *better* than *I* expected. Every hour something is said in reference to your situation & employment.

May the divine presence & blessing ever rest on you both, my dear Husband & Son, is the prayer of

Your affectionate,

Last week, a bundle was sent here. I was not at home when it came. It contains your letters in sheets—I believe from Boston (no letter with it)

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Paris, Augt. 1, 1824.

My dear Becca:

I have just returned from public worship in the Oratorio, where service is performed in English according to the Episcopal forms. I went there without knowing whether the service was to be in English or French, but I knew it to be protestant. When the service began & I found I was in fact in an English Church, I was not a little affected with joy, for I had not before enjoyed the

was descended from Rev. Charles Chauncy, whose strongly marked character procured him perhaps more respect than affection, and about whom cluster some quaint anecdotes, well authenticated. See *Memorials of the Chaunceys*, W. C. Fowler.

privelege, since leaving my own Country. The service was short & without music; but was well performed, & the sermon tolerably good & evangelical. I presume the minister is an Englishman. There were perhaps 200 persons present, I presume mostly English, but neither William nor myself knew one of the audience. The church is long & narrow in the Street St. Honore. the seats are mean chairs with straw bottoms, such as none but our poorest people would use in their houses, & few would use in their kitchens. But this is the case also in all the Catholic churches, which I have seen, even in their most magnificent Cathedrals. One reason may be, the scarcity of timber, & another may be the convenience of moving the seats, for except on public days, the chairs in the Cathedrals are piled away & all the aisles left open. The buildings, columns, roofs, floors &c. are all of massy stone.

It was quite a relief to me to be from home, this day, for all the morning, there was a cooper & a blacksmith at work nearly under my window.

August 8. I have learnt that our preacher, last Sabbath was M^r. Wilson, chaplain to Gen Stuart, the English Embassador, who has service in his own house on Sunday morning, & in the afternoon, his Chaplain preaches in the Church.

I have been to see the Church S^t[e] Genevieve,[1] one of the most modern in Paris, & very elegant. But what renders it an object of great curiosity is that it contains, in an urn, as we are told, the remains of that celebrated woman, & saint who lived in the beginning of the sixth century, & who is said to have twice saved the city by her virtues. At any rate, her iron coffin is deposited in this Church, & around it a dozen lamps are kept continually burning. When we were there a woman was kneeling very devoutly before this Coffin, & another before a statue of this saint.

Under this church are deposited the remains of many of

[1] Now known as the *Panthéon*.—[Ed.]

the most distinguished men, in stone coffins. We entered this apartment, with a number of Gentlemen & Ladies, & saw the inscriptions on the tombs.

I have also visited the Garden of plants & the Cabinet of natural history. These are magnificent establishments, & are sufficient alone to reward a man of taste for a voyage across the Atlantic. Every plant that will grow in the climate is here cultivated, & every species of animal from the whale, the camel & the elephant, to the smallest insect, is here found in a state of excellent preservation, the skins of all the larger animals being stuffed with care so as almost to present the real animal in life. The Cabinet of minerals is also very extensive. I could take only a bird's eye view of the whole—to examine the whole in detail would require some months of leisure & close application.

Aug^{t}. 9. This evening, my dear Becca, I have had the pleasure to see your hand-writing, your letter of June 23-26 having arriv'd. You may have some idea of the joy that this gives me, by that you will experience, I hope, about this time, by receiving our first letters from Havre. I am very thankful that your health is a little improved. I beg you to be less anxious about me, & Wm. We are in excellent health, & I think the climate more favorable to health than that of America, at least the weather is more uniform & temperate. I think it more rainy, but the rains have been light. I know your cares are increased, but I think you have or may have every thing comfortable, without great anxiety or trouble.

I rejoice to hear of the health of our children & especially, the recovery of M^{r} & M^{rs} Ellsworth, whom I left unwell. Tell Harriet, I have totally forgot whether I paid for the binding of her books or not, the binders were Duryee & Peck. Harriet will, I hope, be soon able to amuse & cheer you all with her music. Give my love to all the dear children. I thank Harriet for her kind expressions & prayers. Tell Eliza I am sorry for her lame hand, she must no

sprain it again. Tell Louisa, I rejoice very much at her affectionate feelings, & her good qualities. I shall think of her with great affection, & hope she will improve in knowledge, especially in religious knowledge. Dear little Mary, tell her I love her very much & hope to see her a great & good girl. Give my kindest love to Julia & the Goodriches —I hope the little boys will live & be a comfort to their parents.

I have been about three weeks in Paris, & am as hard at work as ever I was at home. I find some books that will be useful to me, but I am more & more inclined to believe I shall go to England in September. I shall probably make up my mind on the subject, by the time I write you again.

William has an Instructor in French & is pretty steady. Thus far I can speak favorably of him.

Our minister, Mr Brown, called on me yesterday & asked us to take a dinner with his family to morrow. He requests us to pass evenings with his family when we can conveniently. The King is absent & the diplomatic gentlemen have what they call a Respite from ceremonies, which are excessively tedious.

I regret very much that I could not have seen Mr Steele. As it is, I am glad you have had an opportunity of enjoying his society & that we are all blessed with his prayers. Give my love & respects to all who inquire after me.

With the tenderest affection,

Your husband,

From Samuel Lee. W. MSS.

Cambridge, August 11, 1824.

Sir

In answer to your favour of the 16. I can only mention generals. Rooms are here at the rate of 10, 12, 14, 16 or 20 shillings per week, according to their situation, convenience and style of furnishing. Coals are about 50

shillings a chaldron. Butchers meat about 4^{d} or 5^{d} per pound, and beer from 2^{d} to 6^{d} per quart, there being Brewers in the Town. Lodgings will probably [be] cheaper than they now are, many additional buildings being now preparing in the grounds of the Colleges. You may therefore get a very handsome and convenient lodging at one of the lower prices. There is however a difficulty of which you should be apprized, I suppose the object of your residence here is, for the benefit of the Public Library. The rules of our Library are that strangers cannot remain in it, unless some Master of Arts be also present. Now, if you wish to be much in the library, I despair of your finding a Master of Arts who can spare sufficient time for your accommodation. I shall certainly be ready and willing to assist you in any way I can, but my engagements will not allow me to spend much time in the Library. If I can help you with the Syndics, (of whom I have the honor to be one) I will not fail to do so; but at present it is impossible to say how far I can succeed.

I hope you left Mr. Prof^{r} Stewart of Andover in better health than when he last wrote to me. I am in arrear in my correspondence with him; but hope by one opportunity or other to answer all his favours.

We have lately had the Bishop of Ohio here, and have collected about £200 towards his seminary. With every wish to help you and every good project of your countrymen,

I have the honor to be,

Dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

To Eliza Steele Webster. W. MSS.

Paris, Augt. 19, 1824.

My dear Eliza,

I rejoice that I have had the pleasure to see your hand-writing, fine indeed—so fine I could hardly read it,

but neat & full of affection, & piety. It gives me great pleasure to know that you are in comfortable health, & as you do not mention any severe attack of headache, I presume you have not suffered by it this summer. I hope your fears with regard to your feeble constitution are not well-founded. You may yet be a more healthy woman. We know not what is before us, but whatever is to be our lot, we are to be always on the watch, that our Lord, when he comes, may find us doing our duty. You mention some family news, which wants explanation, I suppose it will come in due time. If my name is a *terror* to *evil doers* at home, I hope there will be little occasion to use it. Tell Louisa there must be no *evil doings* at home, & if I do not learn that she is a good girl, I shall not bring her pretty things, when I return. Tell little Mary I shall think of her often, & hope to see her improved into an excellent girl.

I have often wanted to send you some account of the flowers exhibited in this city for sale, but flowers are fading things, & cannot be sent fresh & green. You would be delighted to ramble in the gardens of the palace, of Versailles &c to view the great variety of plants in bloom. I never walk among them without thinking of you. But I presume all the kinds of plants or nearly all are to be found in the large gardens in New York & Philadelphia.

The manufactures of France are carried to great perfection. The silk & cotton goods which are displayed at the shops are very rich, as are all the works of art in silver, gold & steel. One is fatigued, in looking at the immense variety, that are displayed, to the eye of one passing along the boulevards, & through the avenues of the palace & other courts. The *boulevard* is a wide street, made on the foundation of the old ramparts or fortification, & of course it winds round the whole city, this street is from six to eight rods wide & the side walks being wide, invite a great deal of company. Here are the best *Cafes* (coffee houses) where people meet to sip coffee & lounge & look at passengers.

The city is now extended at least half a mile, or a mile beyond this street in all directions, & a new barrier is formed around the city. But the city is full of people, little alleys run back from the street to large dwellings, which are the residence of Gentlemen, or hotels &c. The streets are incessantly thronged, carriages are running from three or four oclock in the morning till 12 at night without intermission, & they sometimes deprive me of sleep. The practice here is to breakfast at from 9 o'clock to 11 or 12, & to dine at 5 or six. The French drink little tea. Most of them drink wine at breakfast & dinner, & coffee, among people of property, is drank, in the morning, & immediately after dinner. These customs & the cookery are not pleasant to me, but by some sacrifices, on my part, & some accommodation on the part of the people where I live, I am pretty well supplied. I find the best families here sit at dinner around a round table—such as were in use in Connecticut when I was young. The butter in France is all *unsalted*, & in this state, I cannot eat it. It is the practice for people to salt it as they use it, on bread, but in this way I think it is not so good, as when the salt is wrought into the butter. The bread comes in loaves or rolls of all shapes & sizes. That which is used where I now lodge comes in long loaves, about *two feet* & a *half* long & from four to six inches thick, almost all crust & none of the baker's bread will make good toast. The roast meats & fowls are all very tender, in this respect, the French exceed our cooks very much, & when no garlic is used, the meats are excellent.

William is writing to Mary Denison a letter in French, & I think very good French.

I now lodge at No. 12 Rue St. More, but I think of leaving France in about a month, for England. I shall have no particular object in remaining in France, after a few weeks, except to give William an opportunity to pursue the study of French, & this is a consideration secondary to mine.

My love be with you all, & that you may be in health & happiness is the sincere & daily prayer

of your affectionate

father,

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Paris, Aug^t. 20 1824.

My dear Becca,

By the blessing of God I am favored with health, although my labors are great & fatiguing. I rise at six or soon after, & write two or three hours before breakfast, which is at about half past nine. I dine at five, & am getting into the way of eating but two meals in the day. William sits up late & lies a bed late, as usual. I walk more or less almost every day, but the weather is so wet as to keep the streets very dirty a great part of the time. The soil of this city & country about it is a species of clay, & when the streets are wet, they are not only dirty, but slippery. I am persuaded that as to humidity or wetness, there is less difference between France & England, than is commonly imagined. This opinion results from my own observations, as well as from the remarks of those who have been here longer than I have. The rains are not violent, but frequent, & I am not certain that I have heard thunder since I left America. I have certainly not seen lightning.

From all I can see & learn in this city & respecting England, I believe we can live in the country towns in England quite as cheap as in Paris. Some things are certainly cheaper in England, for instance butcher's meat. D^r Lee writes me that butcher's meat in England is from 4^d to 5^d sterling—8 & 10 cents—the pound. In Paris meats are from 14 to 16 sous—about 15 cents. Wood in Paris is from 16 to 20 Dollars a cord, & coal in England at 50 shillings—a little more than 11 dollars, the chaldron, is probably cheaper fuel than wood in Paris. The rent of rooms is also cheaper at Cambridge than in Paris.

I shall therefore leave Paris in four or five weeks & proceed directly to London & Cambridge, where I wish my letters to be directed. Dr Lee has expressed his readiness to aid me in my views, as far as he is able.

Our mode of living here is not agreeable to me, perhaps it will not be so in England, but I am persuaded that it will be less disagreeable in England. In addition to this I want English books more than French, & I wish to have my manuscripts under the inspection of Dr Lee or some other person or persons in England, for it is a serious work to read them.

My love to all the dear family, & to other friends. That you may recover your health & enjoy temperal & spiritual blessings as you need, is the ardent Prayer of your most affectionate husband,

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Paris Augt. 27, 1824

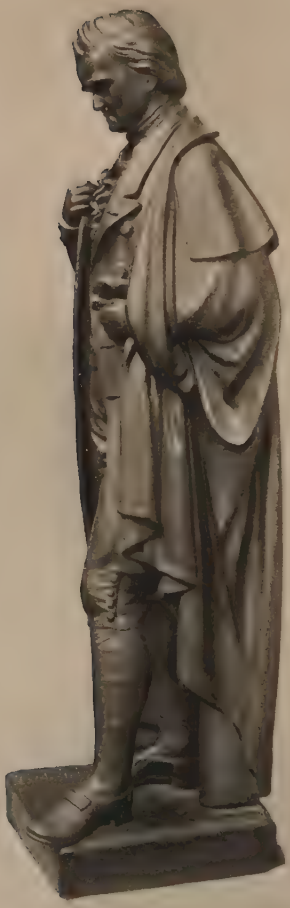
My dear Becca

I have this moment received yours & Harriet's of July 24th. & I rejoice very much to hear that your health is improving, & that the family, connections & friends are in good health. I presume you must have received my first letters, in a few days after the date of yours, & trust your mind will be quieted. I remain in usual health, through the kindness of that God in whom is all my trust & all my hope. William is hearty & makes progress in French.

Yesterday Mr. N. Chauncey arrived, from Italy by the way of Geneva, where he left Mr Dwight.[1] He will write by the same conveyance.

As to my consent, to the connection of Mr F. with Harriet, I shall certainly give it most cheerfully. You know I have always chose to have my daughters please themselves & in doing that, they have hitherto pleased me. I sincerely

[1] Probably Mr. Henry Dwight. See p. 240 below.—[Ed.]



STATUETTE OF NOAH WEBSTER.

wish them all the happiness of which the married state is susceptible. My love to Both.

I have written to you a letter which will probably be conveyed by the same vessel, & also to Mr Goodrich & Julia. I have nothing in particular to add. I expect to leave Paris about the middle of September, having gained substantially what I wanted here. My intention is to seat myself down at Cambridge in England, where Dr Lee resides, who has written me, that he will lend me all the aid in his power. To me at Cambridge, England, therefore all your future letters will be directed, & I will thank Mr Goodrich [1] to send a line to Mess. Goodhue & Co. to request them to forward my letters by the packet to England, either to London or Liverpool—London, I suppose, will be the nearest port.

I intend to write Mr Ellsworth & Emily by the next conveyance, but my occupation is continual—I shall not know much of Paris or its inhabitants. Some general views are all that I shall take. The 25 inst. was the fete of St. Louis, a great day, when provisions are distributed to the poor, gratis, the public buildings were illuminated, & in the evening, fire works were exhibited, the corner stone of a

[1] Mr. Webster's 'life was spent in various literary pursuits. I knew him well, and must mention an incident respecting him, still fresh in my memory. In the summer of 1824, I was in Paris, and staying at the Hotel Montmorency. One morning, at an early hour, I entered the court of the hotel, and on the opposite side I saw a tall, slender form, with a black coat, black small-clothes, black silk stockings, moving back and forth, with its hands behind it, and evidently in a state of meditation. It was a curious, quaint, Connecticut-looking apparition, strangely in contrast to the prevailing forms and aspects in this gay metropolis. I said to myself—"If it were possible, I should say that was Noah Webster!" I went up to him, and found it was indeed he. At the age of sixty-six, he had come to Europe to perfect his Dictionary! It is interesting to know that such tenacity of purpose, such persistency, such courage, were combined with all the refined and amiable qualities which dignify and embellish domestic and private life.' *Recollections of a Lifetime, or men and things I have seen*, S. G. Goodrich (Peter Parley), ii. p. 18.

new bridge over the Seine was laid &c. I went to the gardens of the Tuilerie & saw all Paris in motion, but I staid but a short time, as the pleasure was hardly a compensation for the fatigue. My best love be with you all & that you may all be preserved in health & blest by a kind providence is the continual prayer of your

affectionate husband

From HARRIET WEBSTER COBB. W. MSS.

New haven, August, [1824]

A son of Mr. Harry Dennison, call'd yesterday, who leaves here for Havre in a few days, as he was kind enough to give us the intelligence & offer his services to take packages if we will write a few lines; tho nothing very important or interesting has transpired in this vicinity.

In one fortnight my dear father & brother, we hope to hear from you & ah, may we here pleasant intelligence.

Mother continues well since her return from Hartford, tho sometimes anxious & depressed. The failure of Mr. Wright Strong perhaps will give her some anxiety. We heard it from Mr. Coleman last evening, and I know not whether Mr. Ellsworth has yet heard of it, and particulars we have not heard. It is quite healthy in this place—more than usually so—& Commencement is rapidly approaching. Brother Allen is extremely feeble with his many labors. Mr. Dutton returned better but his complaints returned upon coming to this damp air & he has gone another voyage. Mr. Silliman is getting better. Mrs. Trumbull, his mother very sick. I get on slowly with my music, but still do not feel discouraged. I hope my dear brother you are constantly learning something in your new situation which will make you wiser & better, & that you will endeavor at all times to regard Pa's *interests* as well as his happiness. I long to have you back that you can assist me on the piano—have no doubt I should learn more rapidly if

you were present, but if Father succeeds & you are both prospered I shall not regret the seperation. Mrs. D and her daughter Martha are at Jackson's head. Mary at Soy Harbor Sereno Dwight has sailed for France—hope you may meet

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

(On the same sheet.) [Undated]

As it is highly probable some of our letters to you my dear Husband, may miscarry I embrace every opportunity to write. Thro' the goodness of God we are all in health, & I have recently heard that our friends in New Bedford, Boston & Portsmouth are well. Mary Appleton is soon to be married. I do not know the gentleman's name. We have had a cold & wet Summer—what Mr. Silliman calls a *European summer*. Our vines all run to leaves & bear no fruit, but roots do well. Our elm tree in the front of the house flourishes to the admiration of father Lewis who predicted that it would live. Eliza is still in Hartford & we hear that her health is improving. She will stay till the week before Commencement, & probably bring home one of the Miss Bulls to keep Commencement with us. It has been a healthy season so far, but I hear the Dysentary is appearing in the lower part of the City—this evil is to be expected every wet summer. Our neighborhood are all well with the exception of Mrs. Trumbull, who is far advanced in age & will probably sink away before a great while.

The news of Wright Strong's failure is confirm'd & tho it does not surprise me very much, I am anxious what the result is to be with respect to your property in Amherst. I wish to know the fate of your Springfield note, & intend to write Mr. E. to-day. I suppose we shall lose the interest of the house for the present year—never mind dear Husband! I must manage with the strickest economy & make a small income serve. We have hitherto been the care of a kind Providence, let us not in the day of trial distrust his

goodness, but cheerfully submit to *His* will who does all things well. I sympathize sincerely with Mrs Strong & family all their goods & furniture are taken from them, or attachd by creditors. I fear all those gentlemen who subscrib'd to fill up the deficiency of the fund will yet fail,[1] they are calld upon *now* & Dr. Parsons (who unfortunately signed his name on condition that his friends would promise to screan him from loss); has involved his widow & children in difficulty. Our poor house will be considered a very unfortunate one & this character will prevent the sail of it. O! Amherst, Amherst!

A vessel arrivd from Havre a few days since after a passage of thirty six days—left there the 1 July. We shall expect to hear from you & William in a fortnight. I long to hear of your safe arrival. I wrote you in my last that Harriet was engaged to one who has long possessd her heart; an explanation has recently taken place & all between the parties set[t]led; the wedding will be deferred till you return, the secret is not yet *out*, but I suppose Mr. F——'s next visit will make it public. Louisa requests me to tell Papa & brother that she is a *pretty* good girl & that at present she is perfectly happy for dear Mrs Ward has a little son & she is permitted to tend it. Important news to send across the Atlantic.

We think of you both my dear husband & son with deep interest, accept the kind love of all. Dr. Monroe & family unite in kind remembrances.

With your ever affecate.

From Harriet Webster Cobb to William G. Webster. W. MSS.

August 24. [1824]

My very dear brother,

It is needless to repeat to you the pleasure your letters afforded. They perfectly crazed us with joy, and as to dear

[1] Probably toward the building of Amherst College.—[Ed.]

Mother, she hardly knew what she was about for many days. The day the first letters arrived Mother was busy in the kitchen, making a few blackberry pies, such as our *dear Father* loveth, and I was obliged to stand by for fear of some mistake, for she would have taken string beans instead of berries & other things to correspond. At present she is *comfortably calm* and I shall once more venture to leave her. Yesterday the newspaper was handed in which contained the account of the celebration of Independence on board ship. I felt in high glee & mounting an elevated situation, in a loud & *laudable* voice read it to mother, forgetting not to mention what was undoubtedly omitted through carelessness, that this same *Mr. Webster* & *W. G. Webster* were the husband & son of *Becca Webster*, the Father & brother of *Harriet W. Cobb*—it sounded well & served for a laugh. Pity they should have forgotten this important fact, which would have clearly illustrated the reasons why they were such important personages. But to be serious, we all are happy & grateful to our Heavenly father who has thus far guarded & guided you to your destined haven. May His goodness be continued & may you in his own time come back richly rewarded for the sacrifices you may now suffer.

Mother has told you all the news. Chauncey[1] came in puffing & blowing a day or two since, with 'Grandma dont you think Grandpa & Uncle William made a speech on board Edward Quesnel.' Commencement is fast approaching, & the place will be crowded with company. Mr. Cole will lead in the singing on that day. Brother Allen[2] has lately turned poet & has sent me a Newsong for the Piano forte which I shall transcribe. To the tune 'a co[b]bler there was'

"There was a young preacher with study grown crazy,
"Who wanted a wife to make him unaisy,"

[1] Son of Julia Webster Goodrich.—[Ed.]
[2] Chauncey Allen Goodrich.—[Ed.]

'For oft had he heard the grave Doctors decide
'That better he'd preach with "a thorn in his side."
'Though he hop'd that *this* thorn (could you know but his heart)
'Would tickle, not wound him, like Cupid's fam'd dart.

'So homeward he hies from the land of the Sun,
'At each step on a *wife*,—on a *wife* his thoughts run.
'On a wife, but how chuse her? The question would poze
'A committee of Doctors with Spectacled nose.

'For beauty's deceitful, and wit but a show,
'And dancing, and painting, and music, *so so*
'But how shall he learn the impossible art,
'Through womans disguises to reach to her heart.
'And search out the temper, the feelings, the sense,
'How quick to give pleasure, how slowly offence.

'In short he was hoping like many fond boobies,
'For what Solomon says, is of price above rubies.
'In this sad dilemma, he sighed & he pondered,
'And cudgelled his brains, but nobody wondered.
''Twas all without use, for brains, as you know
'Had always with love-matters little to do.

'At length a thought struck him, as sadly at dinner,
'He was gnawing his corn, in the old fashioned manner,
'*That the* Cob *was the sweetest*,—twas so with his bride
'By the *heart*, then he chose her, & not the *outside*.'

I have seen none of your particular friends lately. Everybody is stoning raisins & cleaning house. I shall be glad to have *still* times that I may practice music more thoroughly, but at present have many interruptions. When you write my dear brother, do not write in French, because I feel so impatient to read your letter that it makes me *irritable*. Eliza is much better in health & still in Hartford. The *Don's* lady preparing for a great party. My Portland friends

are well & often enquire for you. We have no minister in anticipation—dull, stupid times—about serious things. Netty Bull will be with us at Commencement, shall want your flute to enliven us. Well, improve daily my dearest brother & astonish us with your progress upon your return, be a comfort to pa (and I know you will) and we will love you dearly.

Note by Rebecca Greenleaf Webster:

Dear William

Harriet has not sent you half Mr G's poetry & I have not time to transcribe it, but Julia will write you the next opportunity & send on the rest. Do not believe one word of what Pod says.[1] I was more tranquil when your letters came than she was, & did not cut half so many capers.

Note by Harriet W. Cobb:

It is a lie Mr. Speaker.

Cobby.

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster: W. MSS.

New haven August 27th 1824

My dear Husband & Son:

Your letters by the Cadmus were recd on the 17th ultº & made us a happy family. A few hours after the receipt of them, the arrival of the Marquis[2] was announc'd by the ringing of bells & firing of Cannon. Dear little Mary ask'd with a simplicity natural to her years 'if the bells rang because Papa & uncle had arrivd safe.' I believe there were no happier families in N. h. than ours & Mr Goodrich's.

We rejoice in your safe arrival & I hope with sincere gratitude to our Heavenly Father for his protecting care over you.

[1] A nickname for Harriet Webster Cobb.—[Ed.]

[2] Marquis La Fayette.

Your account of the severe gale made us shudder, especially when the wave broke over the ship. I think you were in danger of being wash'd over board. Heaven be praisd you are safe & once more on land. Poor William! I expected you would suffer, for you have my constitution, sea sickness is a painful sensation, but notwithstanding your remarks about the plagues of Egypt, I do think that Phariohs had rather more to endure. We were much amusd with your account of the little English Lady & her crying child. She must have been a trial to you all. Your letters by the Don Quixotte came to hand on the 20th. She will sail again Sep 1st. If I shou'd undertake to write you all that has been done, & is still doing in honor of Genl LaFayette, I might fill a sheet. You will receive a newspaper giving an account of the parade in N. Y. & Boston. Last Wednesday Commencement at Cambridge, I suppose there was splendid doings. On friday P. M. we were informed by hand bills that the Marquess would be in town at ten o clock that a signal gun would be fired to announce his arrival. We immediately prepared our candles, fix'd lathes to our windows, made potato candle sticks & had our apparatus all ready. Precisely at eleven the gun was fired & in five minutes every house was lighted. The scene was brilliant beyond conception. The Colleges & houses round the Green were not only illuminated but tastefully ornamented with flowers & emblems of various kind.

After our house was lighted I walk'd once round the green accompanied by Harriet (for we had no Beau) & then return'd to take care of my candles & give my girl an oppertunity to see what she never saw before—a *general illumination.* Louisa, Mary & Ellen had the satisfaction of going to the door & looking down Temple street, this was quite enough for them, & furnishes conversation for a month to come.

On Saturday I went to the College Library with Mr. G.,

Julia & Harriet, where we had the pleasure of seeing the Gen[l] & his Son, the room was fill'd with respectable Ladies, & we were all introduced to him by M[r] Hillhouse, & he cordially shook hands & spoke politely to each Lady. He returns by way of Hartford, & great preparations are making there to receive him. We shall have him here at our Commencement & this event will fill the City with strangers who will flock hither to see their *Country's benefactor.*

We are now setting our house in order for the occasion. Eliza will return to-morrow. I had an oppertunity of sending on your letters the same day I receiv'd them, by D[r] Morse, who saves us a great deal of postage by his frequent journeys to Hartford. The girls were delighted to hear from you so soon. D[r] M. M[rs]. D——n & her daughters, & M[rs]. Taylor have heard the letters read, & most of our intimate friends have called to enquire concerning your health & congratulate us on your arrival.

We have had another visit from M[r] F. & I am more pleasd with the intended Connection as I become more intimately acquainted with him. We had a long conversation together, on an interesting subject. He confessd to me that his attachment to H. was of long standing, but from motives of delicacy & for fear of disappointment he endeavourd to conceal it. They both appear very happy now & perfectly understand each other. We expect him here again at Commencement, & then, to use a vulgar proverb 'the Cat will come out of the bag.' I am much mistaken if her ears are not out already. Harriet has written her mother Cobb a very pretty letter on the subject but the answer is not yet receiv'd. I hope she will return such an answer as will remove a weight from Harriet's mind. M[r] Atwater is bringing in our wood & Lewis busily piling it. I think it will be all in this week, & then I shall settle the account & *feel better.* I think of engaging my wood of him for the next year, he is a good man to deal with & supplies M[r] Taylor with butter every week & many other

articles. I shall have a scarcity of logs for a winter supply & think of soliciting the elder Mr. G. to purchase for me a few loads of wood to burn *green*, with a proportion of small logs. My flour I get at T. & S. Bishops very good coffee, & tea, at A. Bradley['s], take receipts for all I purchase, & what I cant pay for, I will not buy.

I wrote you in my last that Mr. Wright Strong has fail'd I have since rec'd a letter from him requesting a delay of payment due on Mr Tapes mortgage, requesting me to receive William's note of twenty dollars as part payment. I wrote for answer, that I had understood [from] *you*, that arrangements had been made for the payment of William's debt, but if I was mistaken, he was at liberty to deduct that sum & forward the remainder. I agreed to wait till the 20th October. The truth is, my dear husband, I have very little expectation of receiving the interest of the note, or any money from that quarter during your absence, tho' Mr T. assures me that I certainly shall receive it. Revd Daniel A. Clark is dismiss'd. The particulars I have not heard.

Harriet will write William, & Julia will write you either by this or the next conveyance. Mr. G. is better & has taken to writing poetry, as you will see. I wish I had time to transcribe a little peice which H. has omitted in her letter, you shall have it perhaps in Julia['s] letter. I am the more pleased with it, as it proves him to be in better health. My garden is in neat order. Lewis is very attentive or rather *officious* for he often *steals* in when it serves his leisure & works an hour or two when I think it unnecessary. The Corn produces more than I expected considering the extreme coolness of the summer, beans in abundance & a prospect of excellent cabbages. But O, the Winter Squashes! perfect Mammoths, several of the largest have crept thro to Mr Sandford['s] & one poor squash (the largest I ever saw) in its attempt to emigrate is choked between the paling, the head on our side & body on Mr Sandford's.

Your friends in Temple street & elsewhere request to be

remembered. Louisa sends love to Papa & *dear* brother. Mary says tell Papa I am pretty good & controul my temper *now*. I will only add that we all enjoy good health & comfortable spirit. May this & every blessing be extended to you both my dear Husband & son. And may God grant us in due time a happy meeting, prays

Your ever affectionate,

P. S. You will observe many repetitions in my letters, as I think some of them may miscarry, so you will excuse it. I shan't tell you about the two barrels of excellent soap I have just made.

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Paris Sept. 8th. 1824.

My dear Becca,

The ship that sailed from N York for Havre Aug^{t} 15 has arrived, & I have received no letter from home, which is a disappointment to me. But we have news that the Marquis had arrived at N York, so that you must have rec my first letters from France, about the 16th of Aug^{t}.

I have obtained a passport for England & expect to leave Paris on monday next, the 13th & go by the way of Rouen & Dieppe to Brighton, which is a shorter road than by Calais. I have finished the examination of such books as I wanted to see, except one, which I failed of seeing, by not knowing that the King's library is always shut the whole month of September. This information came too late; but the loss is of little consequence. By the way, I wrote to M^{r} Goodrich, that the New Dictionary of Natural History was not complete. This is a mistake, it is complete in 36 Volumes, octavo—perhaps it is in Yale College library. I understand that a new professorship is to be founded at NewHaven & that M^{r} Gibbs is to be the professor. I have little news to write. The King's health is declining fast.

He has now a kind of paralysis in the spine or back of the neck, by which means he is unable to raise his head. He may live for weeks or months, but this is very uncertain. The Brother who will succeed him is about my age, but a man in good health.[1]

We have several Americans in France—Mr Henry Dwight, Mr N Chauncey, Mr Darrow of Philadelphia, who preached once or oftener in New Haven, Mr Bacot[2] of S Carolina, who is to accompany us to England, & several others. We understand that Mr Sereno Dwight is expected hourly on a tour to Greece.

I have inclosed to you a Letter for Mr Ellsworth & Emily, which, after reading, you will seal & forward to Hartford.

As soon as I arrive in England & get settled, I will write to you & let you know my situation. I commend you & all the family to divine protection. Present my love to all, & accept the same from your most affectionate Husband

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

New haven, Sepr 13th 1824

My dear William

Commencement with all its fatiguing cares & perplexities is now over & we have settled down again to our usual state of quiet domestic enjoyment. Eliza returned on Monday, accompanied by Mr Fletcher & Pinkney.[3] We had a pleasant week considering the rain which began on tuesday eve & continued with short intermissions till Wednesday night—this prevented the girls from attending the exercises of the day, which, with the Music, were very much applauded. To the great joy of the Faculty the Marquis did not come to spoil their Commencement, &

[1] Charles X.

[2] Henry Harramond Bacot, 1780-1833. See *Yale Biographies*, F. B. Dexter.

[3] Pinckney, Mr. and Mrs. Ellsworth's son.

render *that* a secondary object. On this interesting day your welcome letters arrived, & you would have smiled to see the scampering, while I was paying postage the girls had retired to my bed room, Eliza with your letter, & Pod with the first sheet of your Papa['s]. I had to content myself with the second sheet till the first was read thro by both of them. Poor Mother! always comes off *second best.* Well, after we had read them thro twice, little Ellen was sent over in a violent shower to Julia, that her heart might be refreshd. And on Friday we sent them to Hartford for Emily's perusal; when they return, they will be new again & we shall read them over to our friends here (a few of them, I mean.)

I am happy to inform you that Eliza's health is greatly improved. I am convinced that the climate *here* does not suit her constitution, so well as the Hartford climate—the sea air evidently injures her. She has gained flesh & strength surprisingly.

On Thursday eve[g] we had a party of thirty—Consisting of Judge Baldwin's family, M[r]. Everts & Lady. The Hill-house[s] & Laurences, M[r] & M[rs] Converse & some friends of theirs, a M[rs] Schoonmaker from Kinkston, a friend of your Aunt Ingraham's & several other strangers. We had a social time of it & what gratified me very highly was that your Father's portrait furnishd a subject of conversation. It was criticisd & admired by all. M[r]. Everts held the candle up three times to examine it; observing that 'every peculiarity in the countenance was admirably hit off—the twist of the hair, the mole on the cheek, the hand, & manner of holding the letter, all was perfect, & it seems as if my friend Webster was present in person.' Don't you think I felt better? You will be pleased to hear that M[r] Morse has engag'd to take a number of Portraits in Hartford. M[r]. G. bore the fatigue of Commencement better than usual. He sets off to morrow on a journey. The Old gentleman & Chauncey are going too, & Julia will have a

small family & leisure to recruit. I have many things to say dear William but this letter must go to the post office within an hour. The girls will write the next oppertunity & tell you all the news. I must give one page to your dear Father.

Your affectionate Mother.

Excuse all inaccuracies dear William for I am really in a *violent* hurry.

My dear Husband:

(On the same sheet.)

Owing to the hurry of the season I have inadvertantly delay'd writing till the last minute & therefore must be brief. Last week I receiv'd a letter from M^r. Boltwood. He writes that M^r. Strong is keeping tavern with a prospect of success, that he has made such improvements as will increase the value of your property & he thinks that your property is safe at present. The Springfield bank note is settled & in the possession of M^r Eastman. On saturday eve'^g I rec^d a letter from M^r. Strong with my money. William's note with interest was twenty five dollars 50 cents, this was deducted, the money passed thro M^r Ellsworth's hands who deducted ten dollars for the insur[ance] leaving me, ninety-four dollars 50. cents. I b[elieve] it is all right. Your letters my dear Husband make us as happy as we can be in your absence. Your picture is a great comfort to us, & we go on without you better than we anticipated. We are all at present in a state of comfortable health & rejoicing that Commencement is over. The weather is cold so that we almost need a fire. Harriet has had a letter from her brother R. & his wife, approving of her contemplated change of situation. M^rs. Cobb is confined to her room & is not at present able to write but promises to do it soon. Chancellor Kent was at Commencement. I invited him with Judge Baldwin's family to

my party, but he was oblig'd to leave, the even^{g} before. I met with him at M^{r} Hillhouses, & he requested to be rememberd to you. Most of your friends have made the same request but I have not time to particularize. The girls send duty & love, they will write the next oppor^{y}. Louisa begs to be particularly mentioned. She is in fine health & seated at her usual occupation on Monday morn^{g}. She talks about you every day & wonders what you will bring home for her. In great haste,

Your very affectionate,

I think long before this you must have receivd letters from home, no oppertunity has been omitted by us & this makes five times that I have written.

CHAPTER XV

CORRESPONDENCE WHILE IN ENGLAND

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

London Sept. 19th 1824

My Dear Becca

I left Paris on Monday the 13th Inst. & proceeded through Rouen to Dieppe, where I arrived on the following day. We had for a companion Mr Bacot of South Carolina, a Gentleman educated at Yale College. We expected to find a Steam boat at Dieppe ready to convey us to Brighton in England, but it had just left Dieppe, & we were detained there two days. But on Friday morning we embarked, with nearly a hundred passengers in a steam boat of about 30 tons, in which we had no accommodations, the passengers not being able to find comfortable seats even on deck. But we had as fine a day as I ever saw, as warm as July, & almost calm. We reached Brighton, in less than 13 hours. The distance about as great as from New Haven to New York. We found Brighton a beautiful town, & here is the pavillion—a mansion for the King,[1] who sometimes visits this place—a house built in the Chinese style. Here our trunks suffered a strict search, the first we had been subjected to, for the English watch & guard agt the introduction of smuggled goods from France. The unpacking of our trunks was a troublesome thing and I had to pay a duty on all my books which are not of English Impression —amounting to 45/ Sterling. This business was finished

[1] George IV.

in time to enable us to reach London, 52 miles, last evening. I shall remain here only two days, & proceed to Cambridge. Where I intend to make a stand & extraordinaries excepted, to spend the winter. As soon as I get settled, I will write & let you know my situation.

I have sometimes been subjected to fatigue, but through the goodness of providence, I enjoy as good health as usual. William also is in good health.

When I left Paris, the King was very low, & he died on the morning of the 16th, the day before I left Dieppe. But France is quiet & Monsieur, the Kings brother, comes peaceably into possession of the throne, by the title of Charles X.

We left Mr H Dwight & Mr N Chauncey in Paris. I understand Mr Sereno E Dwight was expected there.

I hear that the Cadmus arrived at New York Aug 15. so that I presume you have received our first letters. My love be with you & all our dear children & friends.

Affectionately yours

From Richard Rush.[1] W. MSS.

London September 22. 1824
1. George St. Portman square.

Sir.

I did not know of your being in town until the day before you left it, and regret that I missed you when you did me the favor to call upon me.

I called at your lodgings yesterday, and learning that you had gone to Cambridge, take the chance of this letter reaching you there. Its object is barely to say, that I have received Mr Adams's letter as well as Mr Chaunceys, respecting your visit to this country, and that I shall feel happy in rendering you any services, which it may fall within my competence to render.

I remain, with great
respect your obt. Sevt.

[1] Minister from the United States.—[Ed.]

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Cambridge. Sept. 24. 1824

My Dear Becca.

I am now settled very snugly at lodgings for the winter. I have three rooms, a parlor & two bed rooms. The parlor, where I now sit, & where William & I write, & take our meals, is about 14 or 15 feet square. In this we have two little cabinets, two tables, a sofa & a few chairs, a handsome glass over the fire place, where we have a coal-fire. Back of this is my bed room, about ten feet square, where I have a good bed, a bureau, looking glass, &c William has a small bed room in the Chamber, my rooms are on the lower floor. The tenant of the house is named Emmerson. He is cook to Pembroke Hall. His wife, who manages the affairs of the house, appears to be an obliging discrete woman, who tries to do whatever will be agreeable to us, & to make our situation pleasant. We board as well as lodge in the family, & Ann, the old servant, is very obliging. The expense is not greater than in Paris.

I know yet but one person in town, D^{r} Sam^{l} Lee, to whom I had a letter of Introduction. He has been unwell, & just begins to go abroad. I have just arrived & can say little of the town. The old streets are narrow, like all the old streets in Europe, but I have taken lodgings in the South border of the town, on a new, open, wide street, & have dry smooth gravel walks of great length. The Colleges are mostly old stone buildings, which look very heavy, cold & gloomy to an American, accustomed to the new public buildings in our country. I have not yet seen the inside of any of them

I think I shall be well accommodated here. I have obtained some books from a booksellers library, for a small quarterly payment, & others I am to obtain from the University library, by means of D^{r} Lee's kindness. I have made an agreement with M^{r} Emmerson which saves me the trouble of procuring the necessaries & comforts of life, &

I have nothing to do but to attend to my duties & my business. So that if I can enjoy my usual health, I may pass the time with much satisfaction & profit. I want certainly the comfort & happiness of the presence of my dear consort & children. This thought sometimes chills me for a moment, but I am not distressed nor unhappy. I indulge the hope of meeting my family again in due time. I begin to grow uneasy that I do not hear from home. The last letter I received was dated July 26 or 27. The Packet-ship for Havre which sailed from N York Augt 15. brought us no letter, at least I have recd none. I left a request with Mr Curtiss in Paris, to forward any letters that might reach him, & I hope soon to hear from home.

You may write to me by London or Liverpool, directing letters to me at Cambridge, England. No other direction will be necessary. Cambridge is about 50 miles from London, the roads in England are all smooth as a floor & free from the smallest stones. The riding is delightful. And it is a pleasant thing to get among people that look & dress & eat & cook & talk like our own people. Present my love to all our dear family & friends, & accept the tenderest affection

of your husband

William, sitting by me, sends love.

From Julia Webster Goodrich. W. MSS.

New Haven Sept 25 1824

* * * Mama is now quilting for Eliza,[1] and as my finger must needs be in every pie, I have been helping, greatly to the detriment of my *fingers ends*. When the present quilt is cut there is to succeed another & another still,—so that it

[1] Eliza Steele Webster was to be married to Henry Jones (September 5, 1825). They settled in Bridgeport, where he kept a boy's school for many years, and where they celebrated their golden wedding.—[Ed.]

becomes a matter of doubt in my mind whether we shall have any fingers remaining. We can at least show honorable scars. I think mama appears pretty well & in comfortable spirits. Since we heard of your safe arrival & establishment at Paris, Ma's mind has been relieved of much anxiety, she thinks of you as at home there, imagines how you are occupied, how your room looks &c. And when she has cooked a dinner much to her taste wishes that Pa could have a piece of that chicken or pudding because 'he loves it done in this way.' My own feelings, dear Father respecting you are pleasant though tender. I often find myself when thinking of your absence, the length of time before we meet, or the uncertainties of this life, repeating that beautiful psalm,

'Up to the hills I lift mine eyes'

* * * Harriet will not go to Portland this winter, she will probably occupy herself in making towels &c against the time of need. Her health, except a bad tooth, is very fine & her spirits decidedly more equal. This we expected after what has taken place, for all Harriet wanted to make her cheerful was some object to draw her mind from herself. Eliza is much as usual, Louisa tends baby, sews towels, sings, & tells us we all grow handsome. Little Mary is a fine child, obedient, diligent & cheerful. Mama is very proud of her woodhouse because she has consumed so little wood. She says it is *for lack of dinners*: or rather because tea and toast or a little steak have been the prevailing taste. I made a fine dinner there this week on tea & short cakes. * * *

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Cambridge. Oct. 16 1824.

My dear Becca.

On the 14th instant I had the pleasure to receive yours & Harriets of Augt. 27. informing us that you had

heard of our arrival in France. We *supposed* you had recd our letters, for we knew a month ago that the Cadmus had arrived, but we did not *know* you had recd our letters.

We have recd also the letters by Mr Denison. All these come to us from France. The packet containing three or four letters to William from his College friends, letters of no consequence, but sent, I suppose, because Mr Denison expected to deliver them himself, this packet cost me *nine shillings* sterling postage—(2 dollars). Your last, with an envelope from Mr Curtiss of Paris, cost *five shillings*. This cannot be avoided, as you could not know of my removal at the time you wrote. But I am now situated fifty miles from London, the nearest port, & am much farther from Liverpool, so that I can neither send nor receive letters without postage. I shall therefore write one sheet only, & not address several letters to the different members of the family, & I wish my friends in New Haven to do the same—write all on one sheet.

With regard to domestic concerns at home, I shall leave everything to your discretion. * * *

I have already written to you on the subject of Harriet's proposed Connection. She has my cordial consent to the connection, & I sincerely hope it may prove a lasting & a happy one. I rejoice to hear that Eliza is better, & that the little girls at home are *pretty good*. I think of you all very often with great affection, & sometimes my sensibilities are awakened in a degree to call forth a few tears. Still I am not unhappy. I have enjoyed very good health in Europe, & at no time for forty years past, have I been able to accomplish more business daily, than I have both in France & England. My indispositions, from which I am rarely free, are slight & do not interrupt my studies. I have great cause of gratitude. We are now very quiet, have yet been introduced to few persons, & our time is almost wholly our own. William reads French well & I purchased some books for him in France. His eyes are better, I

think, & he devotes most of his time to copying for me. I can obtain the books I want from the libraries here, & if my health should continue, I shall finish the copy of my Dictionary, all but revising it, by the month of May—perhaps sooner.

As this work can not be printed at present in the United States, for want of types, I shall send a petition to Congress to grant me the privelege of importing copies of the book into the United States, free of duty, for five years, till the character & success of the work shall be ascertained.[1] If it should succeed, provision will be made for printing it in America.

I have written to Mr G. & Julia, to Mr E. & Emily & to

L.C.

[1] 'To the Honorable Senate & House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled, the Petition of Noah Webster of New Haven, in the State of Connecticut, humbly showeth;

'That your petitioner has been many years engaged in researches into the origin, history & affinities of languages, & in writing a Dictionary of the English language, which work is now almost completed; together with an appendix, containing a Synopsis or Comparative View of the principal elementary words in more than twenty different languages. This work is intended to embrace many improvements in lexicography; but cannot at present be printed in the United States, as no printing office has all the necessary types. Your petitioner therefore, for the purpose of completing this work in the best manner, & printing it with the proper characters, has been under the necessity of resorting to an English press. But as the work is American & intended for the use of his fellow citizens, your petitioner prays your Honorable Body to grant your petitioner, his heirs & assigns, the privilege of, importing copies of the said *Dictionary of the English Language* & of *the said Synopsis of Languages*, into the United States, free of duty, for the term of five years. And your petitioner, as in duty bound, shall ever pray,

'NOAH WEBSTER.'*

'Dated at Cambridge, England,
this 16 day of October,
1824.'

*The privilege asked for was granted, but not used. See p. 297 below.—[Ed.]

Dr Morse. I hope all have recd the letters. I believe all yours have arrived. I am glad to hear good things of Lewis & the garden, & the Elm tree. May you still be prospered. I think you will do well to burn a part green wood. William joins me in sincere love & duty to all friends. With the tenderest affection

Yours

P. S. The newspaper has not arrived. I can get no American papers here. I presume they do not pass through the post office. I must learn all I know of America from your letters.

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

New Haven Octr. 11, 1824.

Your letter, my dear Husband, of August 1t, 8t, & 9th is receiv'd. We all rejoice in your health & in your comfortable situation. I suppose you have crossd the channel & are now in England, but I shall continue to direct letters as usual till I hear farther from you. My last was dated Sepr 12th. Since then, Julia has written you all that is going on. Thro the goodness of a kind Providence we are all in health & I believe no one in this street is sick at present, tho the typhus fever prevails to some extent in the lower part of the City; two of Henry Mulford's daughters are dangerously sick, & Mrs Jared Bradley is considered as very sick, the physicians say that considering the wetness of the last summer it is a time of health. The month of Sepr was uncommonly cold & rainy & we had a severe frost, but Octor so far, has been pleasant, we do not need a fire till eveg, & then a light blaize makes us more comfortable. My garden vegetables are all in, viz—thirty green & yellow squashes of excellent quality, (I shall take care to preserve the seed) peppers for pickles, enough for four families, a bushel of corn dried for winter use to make suckertash, & beans preserved in the same way. My

cabbages & parsnips remain standing but the beets are deposited in the Celler. I have been furnishd with potatoes from our own garden hitherto, & have enough to last thro the present month. Mr Atwater will supply me with winter potatoes. I have paid for my wood, & engaged three Cord of green, 1 of Walnut, 2 of Oak. My pine wood is all in & makes a very respectable appearance. I must now look about me & obtain a supply of winter stores—new business for me—but circumstances make *women* as well as *men*, & I find it less difficult than I anticipated.

I wish you & dear William, could take a peep at us this pleasant morng Our Monday's work all finishd windows open in the south Kitchen & the Table which used to stand in your study cover'd with shrubbery in full verdure, a monthly rose tree with roses full blown & budded, & a variety of geraniums. I sometimes get out of patience with the care they occasion but Eliza takes such *solid* comfort in rearing them (& this is probably the last year that I shall be a[n]noyed with the litter) that I chearfully submit. Mr F. is expected here, on Wednesday, & Eliza is in doubt respecting Mr. J's[1] arrangements for the Winter. He has an invitation to go to Virginia as professor of Mathematics, & another to supply a vacant pulpit in New Ham[p]shire—in his last letter he had not decided which to accept.

Our society remains in the same destitute state it was in when you *left* us. The Committe predicted that we should not settle a minister for five year, when Mr Taylor was dismissd, & they are determind that the prediction shall be verified for they pass by all the young Candidates of promising tallents & supply the pulpit with *ex ministers* of doubtful pretensions, or else such as are worn out in the service. Mr Bacon[2] has preachd two Sabbaths to the delight of the females, & generally to the approbation of the Males, but as the committe chose to limit *the invitation to two* sabbaths, he has made another engagement for the ensueing

[1] See note on p. 247 *ante*. [2] Dr. Leonard Bacon.

winter & leaves New Haven this morng, so this chance is over.* Mr. F. has been invited in the same *cautious* way, but declined altogether—I am glad of it! On the 1st October a splendid fete was given by the Don & Lady. Call d the 'feast of grapes,' invitations were sent to a hundred & seventy, the appointed hour eight *o*clock. Harriet & Eliza had previously appoint d a meeting of the Sabbath school teachers at our house & they could not attend, & Julia was unwilling to go without me, so I accompanied Mr. G. & herself tho' very reluctantly. About a hundred persons were present of all ages from Mr Hillhouse down to Dr Ives [torn] the Company brilliant & the whole scene splendid beyond anything of the kind ever exhibited in this city before. Every room was lighted & filld with company & refreshments of every kind, except tea & Coffee, were presented. Eleven courses were carried round on waiters, but the last exceeded all the rest, grapes laid on waiters & heaped very high, exquisitely beautiful! & so fragrant that the air was perfum'd, these were carried round three times, the last time a new kind of grape was presented said to be the growth of our own climate improved by cultivation—they were very highly flavour'd & cristeand on the spot *the La fa*[*y*]*ette grape*. President Day & Lady, Mr. G., Julia & myself were the first to withdraw the clock struck eleven as we decended the steps, after our departure there was an elegant display of fruit & every kind of Confectionary, but we were glad to retire from this scene of brilliant Confusion to still & quiet life. I retired to rest with Agnes' prayer in my mind 'give me neither poverty nor riches' &c. And grateful that Providence had placed us in so humble a situation that it was neither expected or desired that we shoud entertain in that stile.

* Interlined in an unknown hand: 'Mama is mistaken—the commitee invited him for *four* sabbaths but before he had made his arrangements & does not please to accept.'

My paper is full dear husband before I was aware of it, accept the kindest love from all & believe that we take a deep interest in all that concerns your happiness. Mr Goodrich is now journeying Julia & children are well, send love. Mrs Denisons family are all well.

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

New Haven, October 27th 1824.

My dear Husband

We receiv'd your welcome letters of Augst 20th, & 24th, last Monday, & on tuesday another precious packet dated Sepr 8th. I need not say that they afforded us a rich feast. I send [sent] on Mr Ellsworth['s] letter—& the same day (last friday) Mr Fletcher & Emily with the dear little babe, came to make us a visit. They have just left us in fine health & spirits. I never saw a finer child than Elisabeth. She is the express image of what her mother was, at the same age, when *you* used to idolize, & say, with rapture 'turn sweet eyes on Papa' dont you remember it? Mr Ellsworth has pass'd a whole fortnight at Amherst investigating the state of the Collegiate fund. He has returnd with more favorable impressions respecting them. There accounts were more fair, & accurate than their friends *expected*, or their enemies wished. He thinks they will ultimately succeed. Mr Clarke soon after his dismission went to Williams-town to strengthen the prejudices of People there, & has succeeded, if I may judge from a conversation I held with Mrs Gridley (Eliza Dows [?]) who is now in Newhaven. Mr C. is now preaching at Utica & Saratoga & with unbounded applause & it is thought, will take them in, as he did the Amherst Society. Mr Estebrook has gone to the south to find employment.

My last letter was dated on the 12th ult—since then, we have been in a constant whirl of business & company. We have had a visit from Mr Kipp & Lady accompanied by

Eliza Ingraham who is soon to marry a Mr Johnson a gentleman farmer. Mr Fowler is now here & improves upon acquaintance. I am glad Emily had an oppertunity of being introduced to him, & that they were mutually pleas'd with each other. My preperations for winter are progressing. We have nearly completed our third bed quilt the winter cloathing is now makeing & I am collecting my necessary supplys for the season. Mr Atwater is bringing in my green wood, for I found the dry wood alone burnt out like tinder. I have engaged 3 Cord. My whole bill for wood—not including the sawing of the last 3 load, will amount to Seventy one dollars, alack! I have paid Mr Atwater for the eight Cord, & for the potatoes which are excellent.

Harriet sends love to her dear Father & brother. She will write soon, either to yourself, or William, & Mr F. has promised to write you. Eliza is now writing to Mr J. who is located for this winter in Epping New h. *missionary ground*, a pleasant village, but devided among themselves. Our Neighbors are all well & often enquire concerning *your* health, & Williams. Mrs D. & her daughters made us a visit while Emily was here; they were well, & Martha plays the Piano as delightfully as ever. Mary is pleasd with Williams french epistle & brought it here for Eliza to read. I am pleased to hear a good account of *My only son* & entreat him ever to remember how much the happiness of his mother, depends on his correct conduct & improvement. I hope my dear Husband, you will find Cambridge in England, a pleasanter place of residence than Paris, & *cheaper*, for we were all astonished at the price of board & lodgings in Paris I fear you suffer people to take you in, & do not keep a good look out, but I suppose the french cheat with so much politeness & Civility that you have no disposition to complain. Mr Benjamin, & son, who sail d about the time you left us for Demarara perishd with all the Crew the wreck d vessel has been met with, &

examin d I believe William was acquainted with the young man.

We read in the newspaper an account of a dreadful Hurrican at Darien Rufus R. Merrill perishd with Mrs Snow & her family where he boarded. I feel for Mrs M, her cup of affliction is running over.

Julia & family are well, except little Willy, who has the whooping cough, not yet at the height. I hope he will be spar'd to us, but the season of the year is unfavorable & his constitution rather slender.

My state of health is comfortable notwithstanding my family cares, & I beg you not to suffer the smallest degree of anxiety about any of us, & we will endeavor to be [torn] anxious concerning you & William. I *do* pass many sleepless nights while thinking of the evils you may be call'd to encounter, & sometimes fear that you will not succeed in your plans. Then my past experience rises to view & conscience upbraids me with ingratitude to that Being who has 'fed & cloathed me all my life long.' I feel abash'd & resolve no longer to distrust Infinite goodness but quietly resign myself & all my interest in His hands.

One night last week I had a dreadful turn of the night mare & woke in a profuse perspiration. The remainder of the night I spent in thinking of your liability to be affected in the same way. I hope your lodging room is so near Williams that he can assist you at such a horrid moment. I entreat you to take the subject into consideration, & let me know whether you ever have the night mare now as you used to have it when at home. Since writing this letter I have been interrupted seven times by company, & business folks. You must not expect order or method in my letters. I string things together just as they occur to my memory & sometimes spell incorrectly because I have not leisure to consult a dictionary, but I write to my dear husband & son, knowing that affectionate eyes will overlook every inaccuracy. With the tenderest sentiments of affection

fervent wishes for your prosperity, health & happiness, I am as ever,

Wholly yours,

I am just informd that Mr Stansbury will sail in a few days for London & has offer d to take charge of letters & forward them to you. I shall commit this letter to his care Mrs D. & her daughters intend to send by the same hand.

October 29th

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

New Have[n], Novr. 5th 1823[4].

My dear Husband,

Yours of Sepr 28th is just recd We all rejoice to hear of your arrival in Cambridge, & that you are so pleasantly located. I am sorry however to find that some of our letters have miscarried, for we have written regularly, the beginning & the middle of every month since you left us & I have not fail'd writing but once myself & then I was in Hartford & Eliza wrote you by that oppertunity. Mr William Woodbrige will be the bearer of this, & as he is going in the steamboat this eveg my time is short. I am happy to state that we all enjoy comfortable health. Julia & her family are coming this afternoon to make us a family visit accompanied by Miss Perry from Boston, who is on a visit to them. Last evening I took tea at President Atwaters. They have had two Parties this week, so that *Miracles* have not ceas'd in New haven. Madam Dwight, Mrs Moore, Dr Smiths, Mr Hillhouses Mr Twinings Mr Herricks, families & some others, were there, & we had a sociable pleasant time of it. Mr Bacon will return this week & preach for our society on probation, there is a prospect of his being settled as Mr Twining is in favor of it. Mr Wilcox is to be ordain'd, or install'd, in Hartford in December. Harriet is now taking her music lesson 'Auld Lang sine' & I am sitting in my cold bed room with my fingers benumbed. Eliza by the kitchen fire

eating apples, Louisa sitting by the Piano in raptured with the Music, little Mary at school, & the Domestics cleaning chambers. We go on dear Husband in the old track, intending soon to shut up for the winter, which is rapidly approaching. Your friends here talk about you & call very frequently to enquire concerning your health & whether you have a prospect of success. I can only tell them that your health is good, & that you write in good spirits. As I wrote you a long letter the last oppertunity I have nothing particular to communicate. Mr G. has written & will tell you all the news of a litterary nature. We have heard from Mr Ellsworth's since Emily left us, they are all well.

We all unite in love to yourself & William. Wishing you health & happiness, but above all the Divine presence & blessing.

Yours with tender affection,

From Samuel J. Hitchcock.[1] W. MSS.

New Haven, Novr 11, 1824.

Dear Sir,

At a late meeting of the Phi Beta Kappa Society you were elected an honorary member of that Fraternity.

The Society would be happy to be honoured with your attendance at future meetings and anniversaries of the members.

Respectfully, Your Ob. Servt.,

From Harriet Webster Cobb. W. MSS.

(On the same sheet.)

[Undated]

Dearest Father & Brother;

I have taken this sheet of paper so full of honors, to fill up, because I wish you to know that you are remem-

[1] Corresponding Secretary of the Society.—[Ed.]

bered not only by your loving family & social circles, but also by the *literal* part of the community. When this letter was brought it gave mother great alarm—the sight of the black seal agitated her much, thinking it contained sad intelligence from her friends in Boston.

I hope ere this you have received some of our many letters & that your minds are relieved from all anxiety. We have written so frequently that there is nothing new to be told you. Mama, enjoys very comfortable health & is a nice manager in the domestic department. We all miss your my dear Father very much, particularly after dismissing the tea table and arranging ourselves for the evening—it does not look so comfortable to see Eliza with her work basket seating herself in your armed chair, instead of our far distant & beloved parent, but it is a thing we must submit to, and our long winter evenings will seem still longer without your presence, and our *Industry* may flag ere the nine o'clock bell sounds, for want of your approving smile. We are encouraged to hope your prospects for success are favorable & that in good time we shall meet in health & with grateful happy hearts to pass many years together.

Mr. Silliman says you will come home ten years younger & that Mother must put on a great many curls & bows to keep up with you. Heaven grant you may return more vigorous & healthy & then, whether you succeed or not we shall have much to rejoice in. Judge White, thinks you are a most *remarkable* man to undertake such a thing at your time of life, when he can hardly get to Temple St without groaning.[1] Our new chapel is nearly completed, will be dedicated next Wednesday & Mr. Fitch preaches the sermon. Mr. Wilcox is to be ordained in that beautiful house in Hartford the first week in December. I intend to make Emily a visit about that time. Mr. Dutton is settled in his new house. Mr. King[s]ley [?] will remove in about

[1] At this time Webster was sixty-six years of age.—[Ed.]

three weeks. Old Mr. Hillhouse calls occasionally & offers to keep company with Mama in your absence—that is to *beaux* her home from parties. Finley Morse[1] has gone to pass the winter in New York. I hardly know what his prospects are. We are going to make New H. look very smart against you come back, for the town is making exertions to purchase all the ground from Ogden's corner to Austin & Brown's corner, that they may raise a handsome Tontine & Bank which are to make a monstrous block of buildings & if they succeed will improve Newhaven exceedingly.

I thank you dearest Father for your kind wishes on the subject of my engagement with Mr. F.— I sometimes *shrink* from it, lest the duties which must necessarily devolve upon me in such a situation should prove too mighty for one, so *inefficient* as your child. Let me have your prayers, that I may not only be happy, but useful, wherever Providence may place me. I hear occasionally from Portland. They are in usual health, & often enquire for you. I fear they are not entirely reconciled to my union, but I feel that I have *done* right. Mr. F. has written you, but nothing about his prospects because he is undecided—when I can write definitely concerning them I shall.

Mr. Bacon is now preaching for [us] & gives very good satisfaction. I hope [we] will settle him. Mary Denison has been quite sick, but is getting better rapidly. Our other friends well. My music comes on slowly because I find so little time to practise. I wish you were here dear William to help me. Why don't you write me?

Accept the love of all far & near, for all feel more or less interested in your welfare.

With much affection,
Yours

[1] Samuel F. B. Morse. See note on p. 198 *ante*.—[Ed.]

From Emily Webster Ellsworth. W. MSS.

Hartford, Nov. 13th, 1824.

My DEAR DEAR FATHER

Your welcome letters have lain long unanswered, but not forgotten. You know not how much good they do us. I take them out often, & feel as if I had actually seen you, after reading them. I did not expect so much *minuteness* of description, & am quite *delighted in my disappointment.*

I am now sitting near my work table at my desk. In the center of the room stands the tea table covered with its green cloth on which are candles & books. Mr. Ellsworth sits at the table next the fire reading Knickerbocker's N. York. Mr. Fletcher is looking over the last no. of the Tales of a Traveller by the celebrated author of the first mentioned work. Pinckney is reading [a] history of Rome, from which his attention has been called by hearing a description of the famous Gov. Von Twiler, much to my annoyance, & on the left in mommy's lap sits the sweet babe which God gave me, the very day after I last parted from you. This babe is very lovely & healthy & is thought to resemble me, more than any of my children. We are all well at present. Mr. E.'s health pretty well established. Mr. Fletcher is the only invalid, having raised blood in small quantities at different times; & he is dyspeptic & suffers at times with a pain in his side. But his spirits are usually pretty good, he has youth & no hereditary taint, so that he may yet be better & possibly overcome his complaints entirely. He is a very interesting inmate & possesses a character which grows continually in the estimation of his friends. Yet I cannot deny that his symptoms occasion me much anxiety, while I *hope* the best.

I have heard of your arrival in England, but your letters from there have not been forwarded to Hartford. I hope to obtain them soon. It rejoices us very much to learn that your health is good & that William is well. Tell Wm. I have been lately to N. H. & had the pleasure of

hearing a *certain little girl* play very sweetly. She is all *soul* & *music* I believe, not a word did she speak.

Mr. Saml Goodrich passed an evening with us last week his comparisons are all in favour of France, & he seems to have brought away an unfavourable impression of England, & everything English. Mr. Wm. Woodbridge has left for England, his health requiring a more uniform climate. His looks testify to the necessity of some energetic steps for the recovery of his health, I think I have never seen him look so ill, I sincerely hope his valuable life may be prolonged by this voyage & that he may bring home a stock of strength for years to come.

Mr. Wilcox will be established in the neighborhood forthwith—his ordination is to take place on the first day of December next. His church is very nearly complete & is very beautiful. Harriet Cobb comes to Hartford next week, Mr. Fowler will be in town at the ordination & will conduct her home. I think (but it is only conjecture,) there will be a double marriage in the family next summer.

Mama thinks Luta[1] bids fair to be a comfort to her yet. She certainly has improved astonishingly within a year & a half & when both the others have left, her Louisa will begin to be of consequence.

Adieu Dearest father May you be kept in safety & prospered & blessed. Many are the prayers offered up for daily & hourly mercies, *showers of mercies* upon you, & upon our Dear brother.

I hope Wm. will write me soon. I shall answer his very kind letter soon—that is, answer it in my scrawly way. I have grown a sad careless correspondent.

Your very affectionate daughter,

[1] Louisa.

From William Chauncey Fowler. W. MSS.

[Postmarked Nov. 22nd] [1824]

Dear Sir

You have been made acquainted with the intended union of your daughter Harriet & myself & it now remains to me only to express my thanks for your approbation & good wishes. And this I do from the soul with as full a feeling of tenderness towards her & of gratitude to you as my best beloved or yourself could desire me to have, & if I shall be all to her, which she now is & which she will be to me, neither she nor you will have cause to regret our connexion. I know full well that it is hardly possible for the parent to consign his child to the guardianship of another without a struggle, even though on the whole gratified. The happiness of his child is dear to him & it may be lost by the surrender though her chosen guardian is faithful to his trust. And faithful I will be. All that affection & honor & duty can demand shall be contributed to render her happy. Her affection you cannot lose & they who have her affection will have mine. Especially will they have it who are the parents of so much personal loveliness & watched over her young mind & trained it up to the higher loveliness of Moral excellence.

I am now admitted freely into the family circle. They all appear happy. The two over the water are often remembered. I too have followed you in your voyage & tour & shall continue to hope that you will meet with much congenial with your feelings & pursuits while in the country where that very language was formed which you are endeavouring to improve.

William too must be highly delighted to gaze upon the scenes from which Shakespeare Addison & Chatham drank their inspiration. My kind regards to him, & accept dear Sir for yourself my respect & sincere affection,

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Cambridge, Novr 27. 1824

My dear Becca,

I sent a letter for you to Liverpool, about a fortnight ago, which was put on board the ship Pacific, to sail the 16th. I must now repeat what I then wrote, that I have not a letter from you of a later date than the last week in August, & that was sent to me from Paris. Most undoubtedly some letters which you or some of the family sent in September or October must have been lost, by what means, I know not. I have not heard of the loss of any American ships. William received a letter from Thomson dated late in Septemr. I wrote you repeatedly from France that I intended to come to England about the 20th of September, & I wrote from London that I had arrived there. I have written three or four times since I have been here. I hope you have received all these letters. But we must expect to lose some letters, especially in winter, when storms are frequent & violent. We have had two gales since I have been in Cambridge, that have caused great destruction—the first in the German Sea, on the east coast of England—the last on the 23 inst, last Tuesday, when it blew a hurricane from the S S West & did immense injury in [the] Eng. Channel. On that day was held the Cambridge Bible Society & notwithstanding the violence of the storm I went to attend it. As soon as I arrived, I had a written motion put into my hand, which I was to second & then make a speech. This was rather embarrassing, as I was a stranger, & not prepared, but I did as well as I could. I told the Society what our people are doing in America, for spreading the gospel, & among other things I told them that my fair countrywomen far outstrip the men in all works of Charity the substance of my speech, with *half a dozen gross mistakes*, is published in the Gazette of this day. So you see my name has gone abroad—how it will sound I do not know.

The Bible Society was held in the theater, & the two lower tiers of boxes were filled with spectators, chiefly Ladies. I suppose four or five hundred. I dined that day with a Mr Foster, a very pleasant man, & two clergymen, independents. Mr Drake & Mr Thoday—who both treat me very kindly. I have hitherto attended Mr Drake's meeting. Mr Drake is going next week to London & William intends to make up a packet of letters, to send by him for America.

I know scarcely anything that is going on in America. I have neither letters nor newspapers from America, & I am unwilling to order papers to be sent, for fear of postage. I hope before long to receive letters from you, I think *all* your letters cannot fail. I am very comfortably lodged, have a good bed, a good parlor, & a good fire, with a table as good as I wish. William & myself eat by ourselves, & the family are obliging. The weather is moderate, thermometer between 40 & 50, but four days out of five are rainy or cloudy. We had frost to kill vines the last week in Sept & have had frost twice or three times since, but not severe, & we have now roses & other flowers around the house in full bloom. I send love to all my dear children & near relatives & friends. That our heavenly father may have all in his holy keeping is the sincere prayer of your most

Affectionate husband.

P. S. London has suffered lately by great fires, & Edinburgh still more, but it is probable the newspapers will give you the accounts at large.

I shall send this by the way of Liverpool, to the care of Messrs. Maury, Latham & Co. Mr Maury is the American Consul, & takes charge of my letters. Mr Rush, our minister, does the same in London.

To the Same. W. MSS.

Cambridge Dec^r. 6. 1824

My dear Becca,

I had the pleasure to receive yours of Nov^r 5. about three or four days ago, after an interval of 6 weeks without any letter from America. M^r Woodbridge must have had a short passage. I rejoice to hear that all is well at home & also the news by M^r Goodrich's letter, although it proved to be an expensive letter, no less than 6/6 sterling postage from Liverpool. It was charged with *double* postage, on account of its being thick, heavy paper, fools cap. If it had been thin letter paper, the postgage would have been but one shilling a sheet, instead of two. I mentioned this circumstance to you or some of the family, before I left home, as a caution. Probably M^r G. did not know it. Your long letter as you call it, has not arrived. I have not a letter from any of the family of a date between Aug^t. 27. & Nov. 5. I suppose your letters, before Nov^r were sent to France, but if M^r Curtiss had received them, he would have sent them to me. I hope in future that my letters will not fail. The ships in the Liverpool line have all arrived in due time, as M^r Rush informs me by letter from London.

I think however, it will be best for you & my other friends to put my letters under cover to the Hon^bl Richard Rush, American Minister, London, or to Mess^s Maury, Latham & Co. Liverpool, as I correspond with them, & they are known characters. In this case the only additional expense will be between New Haven & New York, but M^r Perit in this case, should be apprised that such letters are for *me*.

William has sent some letters by private conveyance, to M^r Rush, who has received them, & who will take the same care of my letters as of his own.

I went last evening (Sunday) to the Chapel of Trinity College, to see the exercises & the students at Evening

prayers. This is the most popular of all the Colleges here, & has about 450 students. We could not have a seat in the Chapel but remained in the ante-room, where is the statue of Newton. The students, on the sabbath, put off their black gown, & put on a white surplice, & in this dress, in their seats, they make a very handsome appearance. The Chapels here differ from the Chapels & Churches in America, in being much longer in proportion to their breadth. There are two seats on each side of the aisle, throughout the whole length, & each has a row of Candles in front. But in this Chapel there is not room for the students, without occupying most of the aisles with benches. The students in all the chapels read the prayers, each having a large elegant prayer book before them on a little desk, & each taking his turn at different times. Some of the officers or fellows always attend, but take no part in the exercises, which consist in reading prayers & in the performance of music on a very good organ. I was fatigued before the exercises closed & came home.

As some of your letters have failed, I know not whether H. W. Strong has yet paid you, nor whether you have made insurance on the houses.

As to inquiries about my prospects, you must dispose of them as well as you can. I am obliged by the interest my friends feel in my enterprize, but I cannot yet give them the desired information. I shall be better able to inform them, after I have finished the work, & consulted the gentlemen here. I have no reason to be discouraged nor to regret the voyage, as yet, but I have some months labor yet to perform. I would write to Harriet & Eliza, if I had not such incessant labor, with the pen. But they must excuse it. Tell Harriet I expect to if I return in safety, to have some [torn] music from her touches of the Piano. I wrote to M^{r} Goodrich & to Julia, & to M^{r} & M^{rs} Ellsworth from Paris. I wish to know whether those letters arrived With the tenderest affection for you all, my dear Becca, I am yours,

P S. I shall not write to Mr G. till I get more information, but tell him Latin is here spoken, thus, sib′-i, tib′-i, ōse, in bonos, dominos, vos, nos, gignor is jig-nor, &c just as I have always pronounced them. But flos, arbos &c *o* short. There are no professors of Rhetoric here, nor any class books, as far as I can learn, which are not in the N. England Colleges & Bookstores.

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

New Haven, Decemr. 11th [1824]

My dear Husband & Son

I am sitting in my bed-room with a Coal fire on the hearth, & a stove under my feet to converse an hour with you & tell you all the news that I can recollect, which will be interesting to you. We are all in comfortable health & have not had occasion to consult a Physician since you left us.

Harriet has just recover d from a turn of nervous tooth-ach[e] caught on her journey from Hartford. She pass'd ten days with Emily & left them all in good health last monday. The little girls are improving in mind & *manners* under Mr Fletcher's influence, but I grieve to inform you that Mr F. has symptoms of Consumption & will probably have to give up his school. He has gone to Litchfield to consult Dr Sheldon. The dedication of the new & elegant church in Hartford took place last Wednesday morning. The sermon by Mr Howes was very excellent when he committed the People, & especially the lambs of his flock to the pastoral charge of Mr Wilcox he was overcome even to tears, & the whole audience were affected. The Ordination was in the afternoon of the same day, sermon by Dr Spring of N. Y. In the evening a great wedding—Joseph Trumbull to Miss Eliza Storrs. The Episcopal College is not gaining ground,[1] & the Bishop is growing very unpopular in Hartford as well

[1] Presumably Trinity College.—[Ed.]

as New haven. His ward Miss Pollack who married a son of Mr Terry's has a controversy with him respecting her fortune, & affairs look very dark & suspicious. All the Terry family have withdrawn from the Episcopal church & joind Mr Wilcox. Oliver Williams also declares him clear'd from all Episcopalian taint, to the delight of his mother, but we know not where such a weather-cock will turn before the year ends. So much, dear Husband, for Hartford.

Last Tuesday your welcome letter of October 16th (your birth day) arrived, an interval of 5 weeks had elaps'd since the receipt of a letter from you, & I began to feel fidgetty & have unpleasant dreams, but hearing of your welfare & Williams has chear'd my spirits & made me comparatively happy. I rejoice that your health is so good & that you are so comfortably situated & able to perform so much business. *This* gives us all a hope that your absence may not be so long as you at first, contemplated. We are all delighted to hear that your spirits are good & consider this circumstance as a pleasant Omen. I can only say May the great disposer of all events bless & prosper my dear Husband & son! O how I long to see you both! Louisa says, 'tell dear Papa I remember the tear he drop'd on my cheek when he kiss'd me at parting, & I keep the piece of silver & brother William's cent apart from my other money, for fear I shall spend them.' This is really true, & once a week the four penny piece & cent are display'd as a precious relic & furnish conversation for an hour.

Julia's family are well. Last Thursday was our Thanksgiving & they all kept the day with us, even the Cat by Louisa's invitation was brought over. We were indeed thankful to meet under such pleasant circumstances Our number in both families unbroken & all in health. Little William has recover'd from the hooping cough & has grown very beautiful, almost as interesting as Edward was. You were remembered with interest by all of us, & when dinner was on table Harriet opend the door of the Drawing Room

& said Come papa! dinner's ready We were almost tempted to take your portrait down & bring it to the dining room. Our neighbors frequently enquire about you & send their kind regards. Mrs President Attwater has been dangerous[ly] ill, but there is *now* hope of her recovery. Mrs Murdock, the mother of Mts Pynchon is pining away with an incurable disease. Mr Whitney too is very low, he has been languishing several weeks, & his sufferings are extreme. Cap'n Collis died last week & has left a family replete with sorrow. Mr Charles Hunt, brother to John, died yesterday of typhus fever. It is a time of health however, so the Physicians say. Since the date of my last letter, Mr Fowler & Harriet have written you, & by the last opportunity I forwarded a letter from Emily. We shall be careful not to burden you with expense of postage since it is so enormous but write one at a time, or else, several on the same sheet

We have recently had a short but pleasant visit from our friend Mrs S Strong & have learn'd a great deal about Amherst Mr. C—— & family are there still. He has offerd his house for sail [sale] & values it at $4000. Mr A. Dickinson supplies the Pulpit at present. Mr Strong is so much involv'd in debt that he never can be worth any thing. He is said to owe ten thousand dollars. Mr Martin Thayer repurchas'd his furniture, & advanced a sum that he may commence store keeping with the assistance of Mr Sweetser (his former clerk). Mrs Strong keeps an excellent house & her character has improv d by misfortune. Frances Strong shines as a daughter & a Christian. Sarah is as extravagant & vain as ever. She expects soon to marry a Lawyer in Troy. June Cowles [?] is engaged to Mr. Cutler of [torn] nephew to the Old Dr—a widower with two children, thirty-five years old, & a *Unitarian*, *this* is no objection to her father. Mr Bliss & Jennet Root are to marry next week at Prof Fitches, her Father as implacable as ever. Mrs. D. sick with the rhumatism, Mary in New York & Martha attending on her Mother. College is quite peacable this term. The Tutors

call occasionally to see us, but we live quite secluded & see but little company. I seldom walk out except when the concerns of my family render it necessary, & then you wou'd smile to see how alert I am, with a little quilted hood on my head—*clicking* (to use an Amherst expression) over the green, & back again before the girls have miss'd me. The elder Mr G. is very kind to me & has sav'd me some trouble in purchasing butter, & other articles for winter. Mr Bacon has left us for the present. Our Society are so well united in him, that I think they will give him a call. The new Chaple is dedicated & preach'd in every sabbath. Prof. Kingsley['s] house is nearly finish'd They expect to occupy it in Febry, tho' their friends advise them not to remove this winter. My paper is nearly full, & I must draw to a close. Accept the love & kindest wishes of all your family & friends. With the tenderest love, I am as ever,

Your affectionate Wife,

Last night we were alarm'd by the cry of fire. A three story brick building occupied by Mr Clark & situated at the head of the Wharf was consum'd the building was one that escap'd in the great conflagration. It was a store.

To Rev. Samuel Lee, D.D. W. MSS.

(Copy.) Cambridge, Decr. 20th 1824

Rev. & Dear Sir:

As I have crossed the Atlantic for the purpose of completing & publishing a Dictionary of our language, it would be very gratifying to me & to my countrymen, & I think by no means useless in England, to settle, by the united opinions of learned men, some points in pronunciation, orthography and construction, in which the practice of good writers and speakers, is not uniform, either in England or the United States. The English language is the language of the United States; and it is desirable that as far as the

people have the same things and the same ideas, the words to express them should remain the same. The diversities of language among men, may be considered as a curse, certainly one of the greatest evils that commerce, religion & the social interests of men have to encounter.

The English language will prevail over the whole of North America from the latitude of 25 or 30° north, to the utmost limit of population towards the N. Pole, and according to the regular laws of population, it must, within two Centuries, be spoken by three hundred millions of people on that continent. If we take into view the English population in New Holland, & other lands in the South & East, we may fairly suppose that in two centuries, the English will be the language of one third or two fifths of all the inhabitants of the globe.

Besides this, the English language is to be the instrument of propagating sciences, arts & the Christian religion, to an extent probably exceeding that of any other language. It is therefore important that its principles should be adjusted, & uniformity of spelling & pronunciation established & preserved, as far as the nature of a living language will admit. In regard to the great body of the language, its principles are now settled by usage, & are uniform in this country & in the United States. But there are many points in which respectable men are not agreed, & it is the sincere desire of my fellow-citizens, that such a diversity may no longer exist. If a delegation of Gentlemen from the two Universities of Oxford & Cambridge could be induced to meet & consult on this subject, either in Oxford or Cambridge or in London, I would meet them with pleasure, & lay before them such points of difference in the practice of the two Countries, as it is desirable to adjust, & the Gentlemen would consider any other points that they might think it expedient to determine. I would also lay before them some thoughts on a plan for correcting the evils of our irregular orthography, without the use of any new letters.

I know that the decisions of such a collection of unauthorized individuals would not be considered as binding on the community, & it might be thought assuming. But the Gentlemen would disavow any intention of imposing their opinions on the public as authoritative—they would offer simply their opinions, & the public would still be at liberty to receive or reject them. But whatever cavils might be made, at first, those who know the influence of men of distinguished erudition on public opinion, in cases of a literary nature, will have no question respecting the ultimate success of such a project. That my countrymen would generally receive the decisions & follow them, I have no doubt.

I sincerely wish, Sir, that this proposition may be transmitted to some Gentlemen of your acquaintance in Oxford, & that you would converse with the masters & professors of this University on the subject.

I am, Sir, with great respect,
your Obed^{t} serv^{t},

Endorsed: A copy of this Letter was sent to Oxford, but no answer was returned.

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Cambridge, Dec^{r} 26. 1824

* * * The sun has now reached its utmost limit south, & how do you think it seems, to see it but about an hour high at noon? The days are 7½ hours long, but the obliquity of the sun's course helps us to a long twilight, at least, it would, were it not for being almost constantly obscured by clouds. It is cloudy four days out of five or more, & it rains more or less almost every day. We have had three frosts, sufficient to show ice of a quarter of an inch in thickness, but it lasts one day only, & the next day it rains. During the three months that I have been here, the wind

has blown from the South west, or near that point, nine days out of ten, & often with great violence. The streets here are paved, but always muddy, as it seldom rains hard enough to wash the side walks. This has probably introduced the use of pattens which the females of all ranks wear, when they walk; or else they wear a thick sole under the shoe, like a sandal. The Ladies here walk a great deal, & I notice a constant practice of exposing children to the open air. At almost all times, when it does not rain, the streets are full of nurses or maids carrying about young children in their arms, or leading such as can walk. But it is not so cold generally as to oblige men to wear surtouts or great coats. I went this morning to the Baptist meeting or Chapel, where Robert Hall used to preach, & I think I did not see a man with an over-coat. The Thermometer in November & December has generally been between 40 and 50, about 47 or 48°.

I spent an evening lately at Professor Lee's, where was present the Widow of the late Dr Owen, Secretary to the Bible Society. She is a woman of superior understanding, very sociable & full of anecdote, especially in what relates to the state of religion and religious parties. I find the dignitaries of the Church Archbishops & Bishops, are generally opposed to bible Societies—unless they send the prayer book with the bible. I am told the Archbishop of Canterbury went a considerable distance, some time ago, to prevent a meeting of a Society, & accomplished his object. There is now as there always has been a high church & a low church party. The High church seem intent only on supporting & extending that particular Church, but among the other party, there is a respectable number of evangelical & pious clergymen, who unite with the dissenters in the great cause of evangelizing the world.

I shall not at present write to any person but yourself—letters from others of the family must remain unanswered. My reasons are the high postage of letters, and the weakness

of my right hand or rather, the right thumb, the strength of which is almost exhausted. I am approaching the end of my work, & by care, I hope to have strength to proceed, without interruption.

William is gone to the Chapel for evening service. His eyes have been weaker these three weeks past, owing to straining them by writing at night. But they are gaining strength.

Last week, Mr. Emmerson, at whose house we lodge, died, a victim to intemperance. His wife who is a good manager, will probably conduct the business of the family better without him than with him. Accept, my Dear Becca, for yourself & all my dear family & friends, my kindest wishes & prayers for safety & happiness from your most affectionate husband,

In his efforts to obtain an English publisher for the *Dictionary*, Webster corresponded, amongst others, with a compatriot, William C. Woodbridge,[1] but fruitlessly.

To the Same. W. MSS.

Cambridge Jan^{y}. 27th. 1825

My dear Becca,

Through the goodness of Providence I still enjoy as good health as usual, & am somewhat relieved from labor, though my labors & solicitudes cannot cease, till I get my manuscripts published. I sent William to London, last Monday, to get some information, & he returned last evening in consequence of which, I have determined to remove my lodgings to London, & if possible put the work to press immediately. But it is uncertain what difficulties I may have to encounter from the *prejudices* of the English & from the *interest* which the principal booksellers have in

[1] See Appendix XXXVII. below.

Johnson's Dictionary by Todd. It is however necessary for me to be in London, & make an attempt to get an impression before the public. I shall certainly find many friends, & if the book has much merit, that will make its way in spite of opposition.

I have written to M^r^ Ellsworth to send me the amount of $500. in a bill of Exchange, & if I can finish the publication, by mid-summer that will be as much as I shall want. In the course of February, I hope to be able to state more definitely my prospects. M^r^ Woodbridge was very useful to William in London, & I hear is in better health, at which I very much rejoice. He rec^d^ a letter from M^r^ Goodrich dated about the last of Decem^r^, but my last letter from you or any of the family was early in Decem^r^.

I have nothing very important further to communicate at present, & you will excuse me from writing much, when I am worn out with writing. As soon as I am settled in London, I will let you know how to address letters to me. Accept for yourself & all the dear family & near friends the sincere love of your affectionate Husband,

P. S. I hear there had been no snow in Connecticut Jan^y^ 1. There has been no snow here, except one slight fall, of half an inch. There has been frost to congeal the surface of water, I think, three nights, since Dec^r^ 1. In general for three months past, the temperature of the air has been about 48. by Fahrenheit. But rain—rain—almost daily.

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

New Haven Jan^ry^ 9^th^. 1825

My dear Husband

My last letter to you was dated Dec^r^ 11^th^ since then I have two from you—one dated from London, & the other Nov^r^ 11^th^. Harriet has received one from William Octo^r^ 28^th^

We all rejoice that your health continues so good, notwithstanding the dampness of the Climate. We have had an open winter thus far—but the weather is growing colder, & there is a prospect of snow. Our New Year Commenced with a snow storm which was violent, while it lasted, but soon turned to rain, it froze however, & made tolerable sleighing for one week.

Our daughters are gone to church to attend their Sabbath class & I am glad of a quiet hour to devote to my dear Husband & son.

Mr Goodrich wrote you by the last conveyance, & from him, you will have all the news, *political* & *literary*. I live so secluded myself, that I hear but little of what is transacting even in our own little circle. So I shall confine myself to intelligence of the domestic kind. My last inform d you that we had not had occasion for a Physician since you left us. The next week Eliza was suddenly attack'd with an obstinate sufficating sore throat which confined her to her chamber ten days. She has quite recover'd, since then Louiza, Mary, & Adeline have taken their turns, they were not sick so long as Eliza, & are all comfortable except Louisa whose complaint has settled into the rhumatism, & which makes her extremely irritable. Harriet is well, & my own health better than it was, the last winter. Mr Jones has made us a visit lately. He is now gone to pass a few weeks in Bethlehem to assist Mr Nettleton in the labours of a revival. Dr Elliott of East Guilford has lately deceas'd & the people are all united in Mr Fowler. They have not yet given him a formal call, & it is by no means certain that he will accept. The subject however is in discussion & Mr F——s only objection appears to be that East Guilford is his native place. Our Parish are united in giving Mr Bacon a Call. His answer is not yet receiv d. The last Sabbath Mr F. preach'd in the Centre Church, & Mr Jones in the North. Their preaching was much extolld. The severe storm kept us all at home which was a great disappointment.

Our meeting house is new painting against the ordination. So much for Parish concerns.

Mr Whitney, after a severe illness of six weeks departed this life yesterday morng. His suffering was extreme & I am happy to tell you, that Religeon was the subject of his conversation & possess'd all his thoughts for some weeks previous to his death. His friends hope that he has exchang'd this world for a better. The death of Mrs Harry Denison—so sudden & affecting—excited universal sympathy. She gave birth to twins—the first born, is a fine boy—the last was bury'd with his Mother, who survived but a few minutes after his birth. 'Blessed is the death of the righteous.' Mr Goodrich's family are now well. The children daily improving, little Willy acts just as his mother did at the same age—he is a complete little mimic—full of pranks from morng to night but good natur'd & very affectionate withal. Louisa is sitting by my side with a pillow behind her, & occasionally groaning, but she begs me to tell you that she is *pretty good*—CONSIDERING, & that she trys to be patient, but thinks it is really hard to suffer so much. Mary is occupying *a corner* of your chair, studying her scripture lesson. The weather, & the remains of a sore throat, prevented her going out today. Our circle of friends are all well. No one sick in Temple street except Mrs Murdock who is gradually wasting away. Mr Hillhouse *goes* & *comes*, as usual. Aunt Woolsey is as friendly, & Miss Mary as *literal* as ever Dr Smith occupies Medical College, & the lamp before his door shines upon my bed, & cheers my spirits in the lonely hours of midnight. Mary is my *bed-mate* & if the little gipsey did not wake so early in the morng she wou'd be a charming companion, as it is, I am not willing to part with her. Mrs D. & Martha pass'd an afternoon here recently. Martha calls almost every day, Mary is still in N. York. William's young friends sometimes call to enquire after his welfare & request a remembrance. The weather has been

so unfavorable for drying Proff^r Kingsley's house that they will defer a removal till March or April. Harriet is improving in her music, but wishes much for the accompaniment of William's [flute & voice?] She plays & sings very prettily already, & will probably progress faster the present quarter.

Mr. J. C. Salter has lately married the daughter of an old friend of ours,—Eliza Cotton. She is a fine woman and very much like her mother. We heard from Emily, a few days since—all in good health.

While I rejoice to hear that *you*, my dear Husband, are able to accomplish so much, I have my fears that you will overdo, & become debilitated in the spring in that case, you will lose more time than you now gain, *better be moderate*. We converse about you every day & long to see you both, & when we look very comfortable, which is often the case, we wish you could look in on us. Harriet at the Piano, Eliza & her work basket in your great chair Lute in the large rocking chair, & myself at the south window with the sun shining in on my back, a stove at my feet & to complete the picture, a pile of work before me; don't you see us all? I have a neat iron hoop to keep in the ashes so that our hearth looks always neat & clean. The clock keeps excellent time with the additional help of [a] five pound weight of lead—this obliges me to wind it up every 5 days. Keep up your spirits dear husband, for everything goes on just as usual. We have our *ups* & *downs*, to be sure, but still abundant cause for thankfulness. Accept the love of all with that of Your truly affectionate Wife,

From Harriet Webster Cobb. W. MSS.

[Postmarked February.] 1825.

My dearest Father and Brother.

I will commence at the very top of my sheet, and endeavor to fill my sheet, tho there is but little worth communicating. For the last few days we have remained *in*

doors, having had the last week a comfortable fall of snow, the very first which has lain during the cold season. Our good people, particularly those who have horses & sleighs at command improve this fine riding and Newhaven seems all alive, but most of all is it convenient to our Farmers who were almost despairing of fetching their produce to market on runners. The weather is now daily becoming milder, & our streets will soon be muddy. Altho I am no great friend to cold weather I do not feel impatient to be rid of it, but while counting the remaining weeks of winter, find myself very frequently wishing to retard the hours which fly so swiftly. In the course of six or seven months my dear Father, I may enter upon a new state of trial, and tho I do not regret the step I have taken, yet still I dread the responsibility attached to it. I am happy in Mr Fowler, yet afraid I shall prove unfaithful to the God we both profess to love, & thus destroy his usefulness. I pray I may be faithful, may prove a blessing in the difficult situation [in] which providence may place me. If I do prove a blessing it must be owing to the restraining sanctifying grace of God, for of myself I feel with increasing strength, I can do *nothing*.

When I think of my *far distant* parent & brother, I feel very differently respecting the rapidity of time. I then wish to annihilate time & space, that I may once more give them an *affectionate embrace*. Oh, may we meet in health & happiness—happy in the past & happy in the future.

How I wish I knew all who surround you, all who are contributing to your comfort & happiness. I feel dear Father, that it is in the mutual interchange of confidence & affection, in the exercise of all the kindnesses of kindred & friendship, that our only hours of enjoyment are to be found. There is an idea of confidence & sacredness if I may so express it in the idea of *Home* which no other spot can excite, and how delighted will you be my friends, when you can once more return, & enter the circle which contains those you *most* value & receive and bestow the many name-

less attentions so trifling & yet so grateful to the heart. May Heaven preserve & bring you back in safety! We received your last letter dated December 29th [1] in which you mentioned your lame thumb. I hope it does not interrupt you too much & that when the mildest weather prevails you will find relief. William too must take care of his eyes. I took the liberty of reading your last letter to me dear William (in which you laughed so heartily at my scrawling letters) aloud, to several friends who were as much amused, as you were. You may laugh on. I have much to busy myself about & ever write in haste. what I lack in neatness & good spelling, I will make up in affection. Our dear friend Martha plays more sweetly than ever. She with Maria Silliman, (*quite a belle*) pass almost daily. Mr Staples, removes his family to New York in May. Dr Knight has purchased his house. Some of our Newhaven people are alarmed with the introduction of small pox, or Vorrioloid—but one death has occurred, one student is now ill but is removed from college, should another case occur in College they will feel it judicious to break up. It was brought from New York, but I believe will be checked.

Emily & her family are well. Mr Fletcher is quite feeble. Hope to see them at ordination, but when that is exactly, I cannot say. Expect Richard [&] Betsy Cobb, every day on their way to the south. Every thing goes on as usual here in the house, except the little mice knowing Father's absence intrude themselves, sometimes come from the garret into his study, probably to examine some rare volume. I shall leave this little blank for mother to fill—with tender love

your own HARRIET.

From REBECCA GREENLEAF WEBSTER. W. MSS.

(On the same sheet.) Febry 10th [1825]

Since the above was written, Our Friends (the Cobbs) have made us a short visit & have left us this morng for

[1] This should read 26th.—[Ed.]

New York. They pass'd the Sabbath in Hartford, left Emily & family well, & arrivd here Monday P M. Last even^g we were all assembled before a chearful fire, conversing in high glee, as we are wont to do, when we meet with friends whom we love & from whom we have been long seperated. When Miss Mary Hillhouse came in to in[form us that] M^rs Finley Morse had just expired. About four weeks ago she was put to bed the happy mother of another son. She had so far recover'd that her Husband left and went on to Washington to take the Portrait of our Country's Benefactor.[1] Last thursday she was suddenly seized with a spasmodic affection in her side by the aid of blisters however the pain abated, but still an unusual faintness prevaild, attended with a tremulous pulse. Sabbath even^g I went in to see her D^r Smith was there & spoke so encouragingly that I return'd home in the full belief that she wou'd soon recover. On monday D^r Morse wrote to his son, saying that she was doing well without mentioning that she had been more indisposed since he left her. All day yesterday she continued better, till about 6 in the eve^g, when she said she wou'd lie down. She went across the room & steppd into bed without assistance, & on laying her head on her pillow instantly expired. as her body continued warm several hours after she ceased to breathe every method was tryed, (but in vain) to reanimate her lifeless form. Never have I seen so lovely an appearance of Death. She was indeed lovely in Character as in form, & will be universally lamented. I could say much on this interesting subject but my paper is full. I believe all your letters have come to hand. The two last—Dec. 6^th & 26. I wrote you in my Sep^r letter that M^r Strong had paid me deducting the sum due on Williams note, which was 25 dollars. He now keeps a very good tavern—he is so much involved in debt however, that he never can extricate himself. M^r Boltwood thinks *you* are safe, & that M^r

[1] La Fayette. See p. 285 below.—[Ed.]

Strong will continue to pay regularly. The houses are both insured.

With the tenderest love to dear William & fervent wishes for the continuance of your health & success, I am as ever,

Your truly affectionate

Julia & family are well.

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W MSS.

London Febʸ. 15 1825

My dear Becca.

Yesterday I left Cambridge & came to this City. I have taken lodgings & am just seated quietly by the fire side, after a good deal of fatigue. Mʳ Woodbridge has been very obliging in assisting me to get lodgings, but he complains of being not quite so well, for a few days past, as he had been, & thinks of going to Paris, in two or three weeks.

I lived very little known in Cambridge, till the last three weeks, when I was invited to dine with the Officers & Fellows of Trinity College. This introduction was followed by a visit from the Vice-Master, & two other invitations to dine in the same hall, & I took occasion, after retiring to the Combination-room, with the Officers & Fellows, to lay before the Gentlemen a general statement of what I have done & am doing, & what I wish in regard to the publication of my MSS. The Gentlemen take a great interest in my work, and some of them offered to subscribe for it. They also express great regret that they had not been made acquainted with me at an earlier period. From these Gentlemen & from several wealthy families in Cambridge, I shall receive very warm support. How I shall fare in London, remains to be determined. I shall immediately commence the delivery of my letters of introduction, & see what can be done.

I received yours of January 11,[1] last Sabbath, & William has this day received a letter from M. D——n. I rejoice with thankfulness to hear that my dear family is again in health, & I deeply lament the death of Mr Whitney. William recd a letter a few days ago from young Denison in Paris, who had not yet heard of the death of his mother.

I sent to Mr Goodrich the title page of my Dictionary & Synopsis, & duplicates, in October, requesting that it might be printed & recorded in the Clerk's office, & a copy of it sent to me by at least two different ships, but I have heard nothing of it, which surprizes me very much. I enclose another copy, with a request that it may be printed, entered in the office & sent to me, without delay, if not already done.

I have sent also to Mr Ellsworth to sell five shares of my bank stock, send the money to Goodhue & Co. New York, requesting them to send me a bill on London or Liverpool, as early as the first of April. I have written by two ships, but if there should be any failure, this letter must be a substitute for the former. I trust that there will be no delay, if my letters arrive in safety.

I wish letters for me to be hereafter sent by the Ships direct to London, addressed to me at No 7. Queens Square, New Ormond, London.

Love to all my dear family & friends,

Yours with the tenderest affection,

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

New Haven March 10th [1825.]

My dear Husband

Your letter of Janry 14th was receivd yesterday. Mr Goodrich receivd one the day before; & Mary Denison likewise. Janry 7th. The prospect of seeing you so much

[1] This should read 9th.—[Ed.]

earlier than we anticipated has chear'd our hearts & given us all new animation which we were greatly in need of, for to tell you the truth we have all been sick with the prevailing epidemic which has proved so fatal to many Our family except Eliza & myself had it lightly. I was just comfortably recover'd from my first attack when Harriet, Louisa & Adeline were taken, & I had another severe cold in consequence of attending on them & having my rest disturb d. At present we all move about as usual & are well enough to go out except Louisa who still complains of pain in the breast & sore throat, but her appitite has been good thro' the whole of her indisposition. In my last dated Feb^ry 12[1] (written on the same sheet with Harriet) I informd you of the sudden & affecting death of M^rs F Morse—her husband was absent at her death—he has since return'd from Washington where he has been taken [taking] the portrait of La fayette. the work is not yet complete but the Marquis is to meet him in N York where he will soon be stationary. I wish you could see the portrait of D^r Smith just completed—if possible, it exceeds yours, as D^r Smith's features & attitude are more strongly mark d than yours—the likeness appears more striking. I certainly never saw any thing more perfect. Since the date of my last we have been call d to the house of mourning & to follow our friends & neighbors to the house appointed for all living. M^r Tuthill died just a fortnight after M^rs Morse, & M^r D. Deforest the same week, of the prevailing influenza which fastened on his brain & parilized all the powers of his mind he lay unconscious of his danger thro' the whole course of the disease which lasted four days. Deacon Beers has been very ill but has recover d. Jared Bradley & wife are both dead—Deacon Burritt's wife, Oliver Demming, M^rs Justus Hotchkiss, Cap^n. J. Thomson Rev^d C Atwater Most of these deaths were occasion'd by the long fever in consequence of the influenza. Our Physicians say that they

[1] This should read 10th.—[Ed.]

never knew such a time, they ascribe it to the open winter & humid atmosphere. It is computed that one half the population in New York & Philadelphia are sick, & the report of Deaths the last week were a hundred & forty eight in the City of N Y—the deaths here are less frequent in proportion to our numbers, but the very aged, & a vast number of young children have fallen victims to this formidable disease. You will unite in gratitude with me, my very dear Husband & son, to our kind Preserver that when so many have fallen around us, we have been mercifully spared May our spared lives be devoted to his service who has not forsaken us.

Yesterday the Rev^{d} Leonard Bakon was installd as our Pastor. Myself & Eliza attended—the exercises were good. Introductory Prayer by M^{r} Wilcox, Sermon by Mr. Howes, Installing Prayer by M^{r} Stebbings, Charge by D^{r} Taylor, Fellowship of the Churches by M^{r} Merwin, Concluding Prayer, Proff^{r} Fitch. The Music I am sorry to say, was wretched. If William had been present he wou d have stop d his ears, which I wish d very much to do. Our new Minister with his sister took tea with [us] last even^{g} M^{r} B. is boarding at M^{r} Hitchcocks. M^{r} Staples & family remove to New York in May. D^{r} Knight has purchased M^{r} Staple's house. The Old Beacher house, & the old Ogden coffee-house are moved away from the green—the latter is on its march to-day—to be located on Judge Baldwins land. M. A. Bradley has nearly completed an elegant three story house on the place of M^{r} Daggett's stone house—his daughter M^{rs} Durand & his son Leonard are to occupy it. I have been so secluded this winter that I scarcely know what is going on in the world, and my eyes are too weak to read news papers—last evening I heard for the first time of the [end] of Gov^{r} Brooks & Gov^{r} Eustis—tho they have been dead a fortnight. I rejoice to hear that you find some pleasant society in Cambridge & that you are favor d with health. And O! I do heartily rejoice that there is a

prospect of your returning to us in the course of the next summer, yet I dare not be too sanguin—it will take a long time to publish your work, & I had rather do without you another winter, than you shoud attempt the Voyage late in the autumn.

In consequence of sickness & *Courting* I have consumed more wood this winter than I calculated upon another year, I shall know better—& buy more logs & green wood —but Mr Goodrich says he shall burn a new kind of Coal now used in New York, which makes a hot fire at less than half the price of wood—if so I shall follow suit. Mr G. has engaged my dry wood of Mr Ives at five dollars & a quarter per cord ready saw'd I am very much indebted to Mr G. in a variety of ways, he has saved me several times from being grossly imposed upon he says, however that I make quite as good bargains as— *Your honor*

Louisa is sitting by me stringing beads. She sends her love to dear Father & brother, the Girls are both out, but left their love. With the tenderest wishes for your health & happiness I am, as ever,

Your affectionate wife,

From Julia Webster Goodrich. W. MSS.

New Haven March 14th 1825

My dear William,

I think I have not written to you since you left America, & perhaps a fairer opportunity will not present itself than the present. From the last letter received from Papa we suppose you to be in London. We very deeply regret Papa's disappointment in not receiving the letter of Mr Goodrich with the title page of the Dictionary sooner (for I think Papa must have it by this time) but the letter lay at Washington a month after its arrival in the country before Mr G. received it. The rapidity with which Papa has accomplished his work in England thus far is,

I hope, a forerunner of his prosperity & speedy return to his family here it is an unceasing subject of joy & gratitude. Even little William begins to talk about 'Gapper Webser come home by bye.' I know you are longing to hear how the lovers get on this winter. Mr Fowler & Harriet, Mr Jones & Eliza are employed in the same business of courting, but court in different ways. Mr Fowler is a great admirer of beautiful ladies & sometimes I think is rather too complimentary, for a minister whose business it should be to aim at correcting the heart, though he is on the whole a reasonable swain. Mr Jones gets together all new works of any value & day after day reads [a]loud to his fair one, compares opinions with her, reasons with her if they disagree, & expatiates where they are particularly pleased. If he finds Eliza feeble, he looks wo-be-gone—if Mr. F. sees Harriet so, he smiles with his usual cheerfulness & says she will be better—for one striking trait of his disposition is to see everything upon the most favorable side & expect good without apprehending evil. There is no immediate prospect of settlement for the gentlemen but a number of vacancies have occurred recently in the neighborhood & I think there may be settlements & marriages too within six months to come. I do not feel anxious for either.

Our neighborhood will be somewhat changed to you when you return. Mr Kingsley has become your opposite neighbor. Mrs Whelpley has taken the house last but one on the turnpike & will remain for the education of her two boys—the oldest only nine—so that she may be considered a permanent resident of New Haven. Mrs Tuthill will probably take her four children home to her fathers & her house will sell or rent to some new comer. Her situation is painful.

Your minister Mr Bacon boards in our vicinity at Mr Hitchcocks, & a sister of his is visiting about among the parish. Of your particular friends I know nothing at all except Mrs Denison & daughters, who are in usual health, but Eliza could tell you more about them than I. Being one of St

Pauls keepers at home, I cannot often expect to [meet?] those on whom I seldom call, & there is [no hope that] my habits will be reformed.

Of Papa's friends I more frequently see Judge Baldwin than any one. He is very well & enquires with interest after Papa. Judge White too is very solicitous to know everything that can be communicated relative to the health & labors of our dear Father. Chauncey is in the first class at school, has learned through St. Matthew, mother's catechism, Bible lessons &c since Papa went away. For lack of better reading to employ his waste time he has applied himself diligently to the novels of Scott, & so retentive is his memory that most of the songs scattered through the monastery & other of the works he has by heart. Papa will laugh at his taste, but it may be more chastised by & bye. Ma' has written all that concerns the family I suppose.

My very tenderest love to Papa & Father G's respects with an affectionate remembrance from Allen to both.

Yours affectionately,

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS

New Haven March 29th [1825]

My dear Husband

As you are now in all pro[ba]bility in London, I feel as if you were a *neighbor*, communication is so much easier & cheaper than when you was located in Cambridge. Nothing of moment has taken place since I last wrote which was on the 12 ult°. We are all in good health and spirits, but as, now is the critical time with you, respecting your *great work*, I cannot divest myself of anxiety on this account. You know what a worldly minded creature I am in spite of my better resolutions. 'When I wou d do good, evil is present with me.' If I know my own heart I have no desire

after riches or splendor. I wish only for the comforts & conveniences of life & if Providence shou d lengthen our lives to a good old age that we may not have the evils of old age & poverty united, but I leave all in His hands who will do for those who trust in Him, far better than they can ask, or even think. If you are stationd in London you will see all the public papers & of course know what our wiseheads the Politicians are doing. I see by the last paper from Hartford that Mr Daggett is candidate for Governor and Mr W. Ellsworth for Senitor, but I have no head or heart for politics & seldom look into a newspaper.

I am happy to inform you that we are very much delighted with our minister the few who were opposed to him merely on account of his youth (for he is only 23), are now *more* than satisfied they are among the first of his friends, & are well convinced that tho young in years, he is old in judgment.

Last week the weather was so warm that I had the beds in the end of the cloaths yard dug. My peas are coming up, but the weather has grown cold again I shall put no more seed in the ground at present Adeline is so fond of gardening that I shall not be at much expence about it. I shall have my garden dug, & Mr G will tell her when & how to put in the seed. Louisa will watch the pidgeons & I shall take care of the raspberries & currants—don't you think we shall do? Mr Jones preach'd in the Chaple last Sabbath & was much admired. He is busily writing sermons at his brother Days & waiting for the 'moving of the waters'—there are now several vacant parishes in this State. One at Bethlem, East Guilford, North Branford Oxford & Lebenon, & Three in Massachusetts Belchertown, Amherst & Greenfield.

You will please to lay all my mistakes in writing to the account of Harriet's music lessons. Miss Salter is now teaching her, 'Come haste to the Wedding' Mary Denison & Eliza are chattering like a couple of Magpies, close at my

elbow, & little Ellen comes once in five minutes—'Will Mrs Webster please to step out?' Louisa is sitting by the piano swallow d up in the music. She send[s] you, & dear brother her love & says she longs for your return. Mary saw in the paper of to-day a picture of a man fishing up a lottery prize of a fat fish with 6000 marked on his back. She said that is my dear Papa, another with a fish marked 3000 she named Uncle William. This is Martha D——'s birthday. My dear William will join with us in the wish that she may see many happy returns of this anniversary. Last mail brought a letter from Boston for you, to save postage I will transcribe it.[1]

Harriet says, Papa will feel better when he reads this & finds 'blushing honors come so thick upon him.'

We all unite in the kindest love to yourself & W.

Your affectionate Wife,

Proffessor Olds has resigned his office at Amherst.

Webster made his second visit to Cambridge probably in January or February, 1825, and

[1] (On the same sheet.) 'Boston March 16th 1825

'SIR

'You are hereby informd that you have been elected a member of the Bunker Hill Monument Association, incorporated June 7th 1823 for the purpose of commemorating the early events of the American Revolution, and especially for the erection of a Monument on the ground where the action of June 19th 1775 was fought. The intention of the Association in electing you a member is to obtain your influence and aid in [torn] into effect the designs of the incorporation. [These you] are earnestly solicited to employ to the extent of your situation & ability. Should you decline becoming a Member you will please to transmit a notice to this effect to the secretary of the standing Committee; otherwise you will forthwith receive a certificate of Membership.

'By order

'EDWARD EVERETT,

'Secretary of the Standing Committee of Directors.'

later received the following, which makes a pleasant contrast to the general indifference shown toward his work by British scholars:

From THOMAS MUSGRAVE.

Trin. Coll: Monday. Feb. 10, 1825.

DEAR SIR

I regret very much that I have been so unfortunate as not to have seen you this week, but I hope that we may meet again, for London is not so far distant from Cambridge as to preclude the possibility of such an occurrence. It would have been a great pleasure to many of my brethren here to have had more frequent opportunities of intercourse with you, & we are sorry not to have formed an earlier acquaintance with a gentleman of such attainments and character. Should any thing induce you to revisit this place, be assured of my welcome & hearty reception.

There are in your grammar some very valuable hints, but I cannot now pretend to enlarge upon them, & the prospectus of your intended work pleases me. Of that work we shall hear more perhaps before you leave England, & I think it likely to answer the object of its ingenious & learned author. With every good wish for your success & welfare, believe me, Dear Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Webster returned to this country in June, 1825, after a year's absence,[1] two months of

[1] Webster later wrote: 'The visit to Europe was planned with the view of obtaining some books; and some assistance which I wanted, in learning the real state of the pronunciation of our language in England, as well as the general state of philology in that country, and in attempting to bring about some agreement or coincidence of opinions in regard to unsettled points in pronunciation and grammatical construction. In some of which objects I failed; in others, my designs were answered.'

I finished writing my dictionary in January 1825. at my lodgings in Cambridge, England. When I had come to the last word, I was seized with a trembling, which made it somewhat difficult to hold my pen steady for writing. The cause seems to have been the thought that I might not then live to finish the work, or the thought that I was so near the end of my labor. But I summoned strength to finish the last word, & then walking about the room, a few minutes, I recovered.

NW

REPRODUCTION OF WEBSTER MEMORANDUM.

which he spent in Paris, consulting rare works on language and other topics in the Bibliothèque du Roi, and eight in England. There he finished the dictionary. He wrote of this event thus: 'I finished writing my Dictionary in January, 1825, at my lodgings in Cambridge, England. When I had come to the last word, I was seized with a trembling which made it somewhat difficult to hold my pen steady for writing. The cause seems to have been the thought that I might not then live to finish the work, or the thought that I was so near the end of my labors. But I summoned strength to finish the last word, and then walking about the room a few minutes I recovered.'[1] [W. MSS.]

[1] It is interesting to know that Webster himself performed the great manual as well as mental labor; for the entire work—with all the authorities, quotations, and passages cited to illustrate the meaning of words—was written out in his own hand. Such also was the fact with the *Synopsis of Words in Twenty Languages*, and indeed with the whole series of his productions from the earliest years of his life. He never had the aid of an amanuensis in any of his literary labors, except in the proof-reading of his *Dictionary*—and later in its revision when his eyes began to fail him, at the age of eighty.

CHAPTER XVI

LIFE WORK COMPLETED

After Webster's return to New Haven he resumed a scholar's quiet life, with more freedom from interruptions.[1]

To James Madison. W. MSS.

New Haven March 17, 1826.

I have this day received a note from you, intended to correct a passage in a former letter to me on the subject of the first proposition made to the legislature of Virginia in 1785 for a Convention of Commissioners to regulate the commerce of the country. For this, please to accept my acknowledgments.[2]

By your letter, I perceive you suppose me to be yet in Europe. This is a mistake. I returned last June. The objects I had in view in going to Europe, were in part accomplished. I spent 2 months in Paris, where I had the benefit of examining the latest works on the physical

[1] On July 26, 1825, Harriet Webster Cobb was married to William Chauncey Fowler. They lived first in Greenfield, Massachusetts, where Mr. Fowler was called to a church; later in Middlebury, Vermont, where he taught mineralogy and chemistry at the small college there; and finally, after 1838, in Amherst, where he was given the Chair of Rhetoric and Oratory. —[Ed.]

[2] See *The Writings of James Madison*, Gaillard Hunt, vii. p. 162, ix. p. 246.—[Ed.]

sciences, the new terms in which I have been seeking for my Dictionary. I spent several months in England most of the time at Cambridge but several weeks in London. This gave me an opportunity of observing the state of the language in that country. I had intended to publish my Dictionary in England, & one of the principal booksellers, who examined the MS, told me the work would maintain its ground in that country. But the publishers, who have competent property to undertake such a work, are all embarked in other enterprises, & particularly in works of a similar character to mine, & they would not bring into market a book which should enter into competition with Johnson & others.

Besides this, I am not known in that country, and could expect no patronage, but such as would be slowly acquired.

I have however ascertained to my satisfaction that my researches into philology extend much further than those of any Englishman.

Mr. Converse has sent to Germany for types of the oriental languages. Everything else about the work will be *American*.

Accept the respects of

Sir, your obed. ser't

From Abraham Webster. W. MSS.

Lebanon [N. Y.] March 21st. 1826

* * * The situation of the people in this town in a moral view is much more pleasant than heretofore we have a decent house built for worship a Church of about 70 members and a worthy minister settled. But we have cause to lament that the professors of religion do not manifest that Zeal and engagednes[s] in the cause of Christ that others do in towns around us where a Spirit of the Lord is gloryously manifest in subdueing the heart of sinners. As to temporal affairs we in General are a prosperous people

this town is noted for raising sheep and cultivating hops of the former there are supposed to be eighty thousand there are some single farmers who have 1300 sheep Of hops there are not less than fifty acres in this quarter the town and one hundred in other parts so that the whole number would be 150 acres each acre requires 1600 poles so that the whole number of hop poles set is 210000 yearly this branch of business has so thin[n]ed the young growth in our forest that many have been Drawn this winter seven miles this [torn] great labour. Indeed my neighbors have been so busily engaged in it that I have been difficulted to get them to draw my fire wood. Hops will yield about 1000 pound pr acre and the average price is $12.50 per hundred.

I have not undertaken the business. To hire all the labour would not be profitable. My farm is managed by hireing or let[t]ing and in either of these ways it yields me but a scanty support. If the foregoing statement appears large to you you must come and view for yourself. I hope you will—my wife & S. Blair join me in love to you & Sister and your dear Children.

From William Jay. W. MSS.

Bedford, 17th. July 1826

Sir

My Father sometime since desired Mr. Converse of New Haven to place his name on the list of subscribers to your Dictionary, for six copies. It has since occurred to him that the expense which this great work has already cost you, & that which must still attend its publication might perhaps render it convenient to you to receive the amount of his subscription in advance. He therefore desires me to inform you that you are at liberty, should you think proper, to draw on my Brother P. A. Jay, 398 Bd:way New York, for $120; but it w'd. afford my Father more pleasure, could he have an opportunity of paying you this sum in person. He

likewise desires me to assure you of his best wishes for the success of your book, & for your own health & prosperity.

I have the honour to be Sir,

Your Obd^{t}: Serv^{t}:

While in England Webster learned that the British Parliament had, a few years before, enacted a law by which the rights of authors were very much extended. Renewing his efforts, one of his first acts on returning to this country was the endeavor to procure the passage of a new copyright law in the United States, giving a like extension to the rights of American authors. Thus, after forty years, he was again at his first legislative task.

To Daniel Webster.[1] W. MSS.

(Copy.) New Haven Sept. 30th 1826

Sir:

Having, since my return from Europe, had no opportunity of seeing you, I take this occasion to express to you my acknowledgments for complying with my request & procuring an act of Congress, enabling me to import copies of my dictionary & synopsis, into the United States, free of the duties imposed by the tariff.[2] When I wrote to you from Cambridge in England, I had not offered my manuscripts to the book sellers & I supposed that I should find no difficulty in procuring them to be published, but after I went to London, I soon found that the principal publishers were engaged in a new edition of Johnson, & in a new work of a like kind; and they would not bring into market

[1] Daniel Webster was a very distant kinsman.

[2] See p. 250, *ante*.—[Ed.]

a work that might come in competition with those in which they were engaged. The smaller booksellers & publishers could not undertake so heavy a publication. One of the principal booksellers who examined my manuscript said the work would maintain its ground in England; but his engagements would not permit him to undertake the publication. I am therefore obliged to wait for types to execute the work in this country; and this has caused a great delay. But this delay, I find, will be very useful to the work; & on the whole I have reason to be well satisfied with the result, both of my voyage & of my application to the English booksellers.

There is another subject, Sir, to which I take the liberty to invite your attention.

Since the celebrated decision, respect[ing] copy-right, by the highest British tribunal, it seems to have been generally admitted that an author has not a permanent & exclusive right to the publication of his original works, at common law; and that he must depend wholly on statutes for his enjoyment of that right. As I firmly believe this decision to be contrary to all our best established principles of *right* & *property*, & as I have reason to think such a decision would not now be sanctioned by the authorities of this country, I sincerely desire that while you are a member of the house of representatives in Congress, your talents may be exerted in placing this species of property on the same footing as all other property, as to exclusive right & permanence of possession.

Among all modes of acquiring property, or exclusive ownership, the act or operation of *creating* or *making* seems to have the first claim. If anything can justly give a man an exclusive right to the occupancy & enjoyment of a thing, it must be the fact that he has *made* it. The right of a farmer & mechanic to the exclusive enjoyment & right of disposal of what they *make* or *produce*, is never questioned. What then can make a difference between the produce of

muscular strength & the produce of the *intellect*? If it should be said, that as the purchaser of a bushel of wheat has obtained not only the exclusive right to the use of it for food, but the right to sow it & make increase & profit by it; let it be replied, this is true; but if he sows the wheat, he must sow it on his own ground or soil. The case is different with respect to the copy of a book, which a purchaser has obtained, for the copy-right is the *author's soil*, which the purchaser can not legally occupy.

Upon what principle, let me ask, can my fellow citizens declare that the productions of the farmer, & the artisan shall be protected by common law, or the principles of natural & social right, without a Special Statute, & without paying a premium for the enjoyment of their property, while they declare that I have only a temporary right to the fruits of my labor, & even this can not be enjoyed without giving a premium? Are such principles as these consistent with the established doctrines of property, & of moral right & wrong, among an enlightened people? Are such principles consistent with the high & honorable notions of justice & equal privilege, which our citizens claim to entertain & to cherish as characteristic of modern improvements in civil society? How can the *recent origin* of a particular species of property vary the principles of ownership? I say nothing of the inexpedience of such a policy, as it regards the discouragement of literary exertions. Indeed I can probably say nothing on this subject, that you have not said or thought; at least, I presume you have often contemplated this subject in all its bearings.

The British parliament about ten or twelve years ago passed a new act on this subject, giving to authors & proprietors of new works an absolute right to the exclusive use of the copy-right for twenty-eight years, with some other provisions which I do not recollect, but the act makes or continues the condition that the author or proprietor shall deposit *eleven copies* of the work in Stationer's Hall,

for the benefit of certain public libraries. This premium will often amount to *fifty pounds sterling* or more. An effort was made by publishers to obtain a repeal of this provision; but it was opposed by the institutions which were to receive the benefit & the attempt failed.

I have a great interest in this question, & I think the interests of science & literature in this question are by no means inconsiderable.

I sincerely wish our Legislature would come at once to the line of right & justice on this subject, & pass a new act, the preamble to which shall admit the principle that an author has, by common law, or natural justice, the sole & *permanent* right to make profit by his own labor, & that his heirs & assigns shall enjoy the right, unclogged with conditions. The act thus admitting the right would prescribe only the *mode* by which it shall be ascertained, secured & enjoyed, & violations of the right punished; & perhaps make some provisions for the case of attempts to elude the statute by slight alterations of books by mutilations & transpositions.

Excuse me, Sir, for the trouble I give you, & believe me, with much respect,

Your Obed^{t} Serv^{t}

From DANIEL WEBSTER. W. MSS.

(Copy.) Boston Oct. 14 1826

DEAR SIR:—

I have received yours of the 30th of September, and shall with your permission, lay it before the Committee of the Judiciary next session, as that committee has in contemplation some important changes in the law respecting copyright. Your opinion in the abstract, is certainly right & incontrovertible. Authorship, is, in its nature, ground of property. Most people I think are as well satisfied, (or better) with the reasoning of Mr. Justice Yates, as with that

of Lord Mansfield, in the great case of Miller & Taylor. But after all, property, in the social state, must be the creature of law; & it is a question of expediency, high & general, not particular expediency, how & how far, the rights of authorship should be protected. I confess frankly that I see, or think I see objections to make it perpetual. At the same time I am willing to extend it further than at present, & am fully persuaded that it ought to be relieved from all charges, such as depositing copies, &c.

Yours,

From WILLIAM CRANCH. W. MSS.

Washington 10th. March 1827.

* * * We all enjoy excellent health and dare not yet begin to complain of the infirmities of age, although it is evident enough that the tide has begun to ebb.

I believe Mrs. Cranch is writing to her sister. If she should be otherwise engaged, assure Mrs. Webster of our Love, & yourself of the affection and respect of your brother

To DANIEL WEBSTER. W. MSS.

(Copy.) New Haven Jany 29, 1827

DEAR SIR:—

It would gratify me to know that the Judiciary Committee have in contemplation a new Copyright law. Some new provisions are much wanted, and the *date* required in the present law, is a singularity that exposes the government to the ridicule of the most candid men abroad. I sincerely hope I may never be obliged to insert such an *atheistical* date (to use a word borrowed from a foreign journal) in any publication of mine. The Session of Congress I suppose, will be short, but I hope this subject will not be omitted.

I am Sir

Very respectfully,

Your Obedt Servt

From Edward Everett. W. MSS.

Winter-hill, Charlestown,
19 June 1827

* * * There can be no doubt, however, that Walker had access to the best sources of information, as to the fashionable pronunciation of the language. He was selected, by Edmund Burke, as his Son's Master in Elocution; he was familiarly called 'elocution Walker': and having occasion to present a petition to the House of Commons, & invoking Burke's aid on that occasion, Mr. Burke introduced him to a Nobleman in this manner; 'Here, my Lord Berkel[e]y, is Mr. Walker, whom not to know, by name at least, would argue want of knowledge of the harmonies, cadencies, & properties of our language.'

* * * I hope, Dear Sir, you will excuse these crude suggestions. I am really much less of an adept in pronunciation, than I ought to be, as a public speaker. I have never paid much attention to the subject; & have made the foregoing statements principally for the purpose of manifesting a respectful attention to your request.

I beg leave, to assure you, that I look forward with great eagerness to the Publication of your Work, which I doubt not will prove, as Honorable to the Country, as it has been laborious to yourself. Hoping that you will reap a rich reward, in the approbation of the Country & the literary Public at large, I remain, Dear Sir,

With high Respect,
Your faithful humble Servant,

From Abraham Webster. W. MSS.

Lebanon Nov^{r} 22^{d} 1827

Dear Brother

When I look back on my late journey to New England, The numerous calls we made and the kind reception we received from all our friends I find great cause of

gratitude to that good & kind Providence which guided us all the way and brought us home in safety and health.

After we left N. Haven we called on the family of Seymour in Litchfield. On Ensign Sheffield & our nephew Charles at Stockbridge all whom we found well and were received with the highest marks of friendship. When we left Stockbridge we found the road tolerably good to Albany, and from thence to Lebanon it was very bad traveling on account of the incessant rains that have fallen almost every day since the Equanoctial storm. since we returned home the Sun has shown but a few hours at a time, the sky is overcast with clouds continually & abundance of rain till within about ten days since that it has snowed almost every day & the snow is now about eight inches deep & continues falling Great quantities of Corn Potatoes and Apples are ungathered, and I believe will be spoiled.

You will recollect I expressed my fear that Mr Chapman our Clergyman would not continue with us on account of his being a Free Mason but on my return I found him here and the minds of the people less agitated with the Morgan affair than they had been. I think it probable he will be Installed soon. We learn by the Greenfield paper that Mr Fowler is dismis[s]ed from that people we do not know the reason but suppose it on account of his ill health.

I do not find my health injured by my journey but rather improved. My wife enjoys good health since our return. She looks back with pleasure to N. Haven, thinks it the most delightful place she ever visited & the more so on the account of the respect shown by you & Sister and Mr Goodrich's family.

I wish to acknowledge my fault in not thanking you when you gave me those Books. they are surely a valueable present and I feel grateful to you for them & the many favours I have received from you in former days.

Numbers are inquireing of me about your Dictionary they seem anxious to have sight at it

Please to accept our highest wishes for the happiness of you & Sister and your Children, both here & hereafter, and remember us to M^r^ Goodrich, Proff. Goodrich and his wife.

Soon after Webster's return to this country, arrangements were made for the publication of *The American Dictionary* in two volumes quarto of more than a thousand pages each. The edition consisted of twenty-five hundred copies and was completed at the close of November, 1828.

From WILLIAM JAY. W. MSS.

Bedford 31^st^: Dec^r^: 1828.

SIR

I received by M^r^. Cook, your letter of the 15^th^: ins^t^: & the copies of your dictionary for which my Father subscribed. My Father desires me to thank you for the two additional copies, mentioned in your letter, & to assure you, that he accepts them as a mark of the continuance of those friendly feelings which you have so long manifested towards him. His state of health deprives him of the pleasure of examining the dictionary, but he both hopes & believes, that it will be productive of reputation & emolument to its author.

The partial inspection I have yet been able to give this great work, convinces me that it is a very valuable acquisition to our literature, & that it affords a proud proof of American talent & learning.

I have the honor to be Sir, with great respect,

Your very obd^t^: Serv^t^:

This American edition was speedily followed by the publication of an edition of three thousand copies in London, under the superintendence of E. H. Barker, Esq., editor of the *Thesaurus Graecæ Linguæ* of Henry Stephens.

Webster was fortunate in his English publisher who, by his sane and friendly criticisms, showed his genuine sympathy with, and his appreciation of, Webster's work. He was far in advance of the majority of British scholars.

Some extracts from Mr. Barker's letters are of interest, for they express the hopes and prophecies in regard to a common language which filled Webster's heart, in the words of an English contemporary.

From E. H. BARKER. W. MSS.

Thetford, Norfolk, England,
July 8, 1829.

SIR,

My respected friend, Mr. John Pickering of Boston U.S., had called my attention to your *American Dictionary of the English Tongue*, & I requested him to send a copy to me, which is probably now on the way to this country. However, the *North American Review*, and another article in the *London Mag. for June*, 1829, had convinced me that I should do an acceptable service to my countrymen, if I reprinted the work. I have therefore announced my intention of doing so, as you may see by turning to my Letter in the present N°. of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. A sight of this Letter induced Mr. John Miller of London to state to me that he had been in correspondence with you on the subject, that you had given to him a power of Attorney to

enter into an engagement with any London publishers for the reprint, that he had failed in consequence of their being all interested in TODD's *Johnson*, & that he was willing to transfer to me your first volume for reprinting, if I would agree to let you have a share of the profits. I immediately wrote to express my acceptance of these terms, because I had intended to propose them to you of my own accord. I have this day received from him your first volume, containing a few marginal corrections, & I have already applied to a celebrated printer, (Richard Taylor Esq. of Shoe Lane, London,) for an estimate of the expenses of a reprint. I told to M^r^. Miller that I should willingly let you have a portion of the profits, after all the expenses were cleared, on the condition that you favoured me with your *Curæ Secundæ*, so as to give greater weight to this edition, & also with any original materials about the English language, etc. suitable for an Appendix,—an Appendix worthy of such a magnificent & elaborate performance. I shall also wish to tax your generosity, 1. for the 2^d^ vol. of your work with your marginal corrections for the press, 2. for three copies of your work, (in one of which you will put your name & my own,) in order that I may, by lending the book to intelligent friends, obtain additions & improvements for the Appendix, 3. copies of any American Magazines & Reviews, which contain any notices of your work, with your comments on them, 4. one or two able MS. reviews of your book by impartial & intelligent & eloquent Americans written in a free spirit, without any nationality, & calculated for insertion in our Quarterly Periodicals in England, & also one or two clever short notices for our Magazines and Monthly periodicals. If you can speedily furnish me with such articles, it will enable me to give *extensive* and *early* celebrity to your work, & will prevent any malignant attacks proceeding from the parties, (very powerful men,) who are interested in Todd's Johnson; but such Reviews as I require, must be impartially, ably, eloquently, interestingly,

strikingly written to be of any real service. In transmitting these articles to me, you will take great care to prevent their getting into the English Post-Office on their arrival:—otherwise the postage will be *very heavy* indeed;—you can get the articles consigned to the care of M^r J. Miller, & request him to forward them to me through M^r Valpy, Red Lion Court, Fleet Street, or you can have them *directed* to me & forwarded to M^r Valpy in the first instance. Your publishers, who must be occasionally sending to London, should be consulted how you are to avoid all possibility of the parcels getting into the English Post-Office, when they quit the vessel, which has brought them from America. I have smarted *severely* on former occasions under this oppressive proceeding on the part of our Post-Office, & therefore as a burnt child, I dread the fire. I shall assign to you one *sixth* of the profits after all the expenses are cleared, & as I am going to bring out the work in N^os, if it succeeds, (as I fully anticipate,) there will be profits before any great length of time. It will do if you dispatch the 2^d vol. of your work for the press 4 or 5 months after you have rec^d. my letter; the 3 complete copies of your work, & the American articles respecting it, printed & MS., had better be sent *as soon as possible*. Your MS. materials for the Appendix need not be sent for 6 or 8 months from the receipt of my Letter. You can make any corrections or additions on the margin of the 2^d. vol. before you send it off. You had also better send to me a deed of assignment of the property in your Dictionary, executed according to the forms of American law, in order to protect me from depredation by piracy. This deed will be of no avail in America, but it may be adequate protection to me. Professor Anthon did so by me in respect to his *Lemprière*, which I have reprinted in England, & of which 1000 copies have been sold here. I must also beg two more favours of you, 1. to procure for me any *genuine* aboriginal speeches (by native Americans) as specimens of barbarian

eloquence, which I wish to publish, 2. to send to me copies of all your publications.

I remain, Sir, with every good wish for your success in this work, & with personal respect & esteem,

Your obedient humble Servant,

From the Same. W. MSS.

Thetford, Norfolk, England, June 27, 1831.

* * * Did you ever see Sir Herbert Croft's *Letter to the Princess Royal of England on the Engl. and German Languages*, 1797, * * * I hope to gratify your patriotism by the following extracts. 'The future history of the other three quarters of the world will probably be much affected by America's speaking the language of England. Its natives write the language particularly well, considering they have no Dictionary yet, & how insufficient *Johnson's* is. *Washington's* speeches seldom exhibited more than a word or two liable to the least objection; & from the style of his publications, as much or more accuracy may be expected from his successor, *Adams*. Perhaps we are, just now, not very far distant from the precise moment for making some grand attempt, with regard to fixing the *standard* of our language (no *language* can be fixed,) in America. Such an attempt would, I think, succeed in America for the same reasons, that would make it fail in England; whither, however, it would communicate its good effects. Deservedly immortal would be that *patriot*, on either side of the Atlantic, who should succeed in such an attempt. * * * During the American Revolution, the idea was started of revenging themselves on England by rejecting its language, & adopting that of France. Had this taken place, the author of a Dict^y. of the English Language, could not proudly look to its being used, half a century hence, by 15 or 20 millions of people more than exist to use it now.'

From the Same.[1] W. MSS.

Thetford, Norfolk, England.

There has lately appeared a book with the following title: —'Origin of the Celtic Nations proved by a Comparison of their Dialects with the Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, and Teutonic Languages' forming a Supplement to 'Researches into the Physical History of Mankind' by J. C. Prichard, M.D. Oxford 1831, pp 94, 8vo It is dedicated to Dr. Grimm to whose profound linguistical researches in his German Grammar, I have already invited your attention.[2]

Some estimate may be formed of the labor involved in his work, from the fact that the first edition of this dictionary contained twelve thousand words, and between thirty and forty thousand definitions, which are not to be found in any preceding work. In fact, it was for his definitions that Webster, for many years, found favor.

Seventy years had elapsed since the publication of Johnson's *Dictionary*; and scarcely an

[1] Not found for collation.—[Ed.]

[2] Dr. Jacob Grimm (or the elder Grimm), born in 1785, two years after Webster had published his 'First Part,' and Bopp, born in 1791, were two in that bright constellation of German linguists and philologists who by special investigation advanced knowledge, and settled the most important facts in the history and development of language. Webster was their pioneer in discovery, and how cordially he would have admired and embraced their surpassing skill, had he been allowed to enter into their domains! His generous zeal for scholarly work, his enthusiastic admiration of successful attainment would have revelled in Grimm, Curtius, and the splendid cluster of German specialists. By their special limitations—each devoting himself to smaller fields of investigation—they have reorganized the study of language. Yet Webster in his sixty years of research passed over a vast field of exploration and stepped a little distance in each of their several pathways.

improvement had been attempted in the various editions through which it had passed, or the numerous compilations to which it had given rise, except by the addition of a few words to the vocabulary. Yet in this period, the English mind was putting itself forth in every direction, with an accuracy of research, and a fertility of invention, which had been without a parallel in its history, up to that time. A complete revolution had taken place in almost every branch of physical science; new departments had been created, new principles developed, new modes of classification and description adopted. The political changes which so signally marked that period; the excitement of feeling and conflict of opinion resulting from the American and French Revolutions; and the numerous modifications which followed in the institutions of society, had also left a deep impress on the language of politics, law, and general literature. Under these circumstances, to make a defining dictionary adapted to the contemporaneous state of our language was to produce an entirely new work.

At this distance of time the necessity and the excellence of his labors are minimized by their successors and improvers.

The results of his inquiries into the origin and filiation of languages were embodied in a work about half the size of the American *Dictionary*, entitled *A Synopsis of Words in Twenty Languages*. This, owing to the expense of the undertaking, was never published,

as there were neither types in the United States to print it, nor scholars who demanded its publication. Webster had made an attempt to get it published by private subscription, and later, in 1824, repeated this in connection with the possible publication of his *Dictionary* in England. This laborious result of his investigations has never been given to the world, but its results as far as language is concerned were embodied in the history of the etymology of our leading words in the completed and revised *Dictionary* of 1841, shortly before his death.

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

[Endorsed N. Haven May 1829]

* * * I have been more unwell the last week, & have taken an Emetic. I am now going to try the steel filings as a stimulant, for my appetite, espicially for animal food is entirely gone. I am going to take a ride this morn^{g} with H. Ellsworth Jun^{r}. who is here, with an old jog trott horse of his Fathers, & Julia, & I, intend to take the comfort of riding while we can enjoy it safely.

From the Same. W. MSS.

New Haven June 20th 1829

Dear Husband

Your last letter was handed me by M^{rs} Ellsworth who has continued here till this morn^{g}. I have had two refreshing rides with her, & Julia this week. My appetite has left me again, perhaps I boasted too soon, but I rather think, the eating a small piece of Gooseberry pye brought on a

return of sickness & lang[u]or. I shall keep to a simple diet in future. I buy one quarter of Lamb every week, & can eat a very little of it my self, it lasts the family 4 days. Mary has been quite unwell, a canker d mouth, attended with considerable fever. I consulted with D^r^ Ives who prescribed an emetic which has broke up the fever so that she is comfortable again. She is very hungry today, & rather displeased because I will not permit her to eat a full meal of lobster. New Haven is full of Company every Hotel in the city crouded, & I hardly dare walk out, for the fear of bringing myself into trouble. I dare say people think me very inhospitable, but I cannot entertain company, & do myself, & family justice. * * * [torn] Parties on the Canal are very much in vogue; Last Saturday a very respectable party of all ages went on a sail, Deacon Beers & Lady, Judge Baldwin & Wife the whole tale of Hillhouses Aunt *Docia* & all. Your Lady was invited but pleaded indisposition the boat did not return till 9 in the eve^g^ I really thought this was encroaching on holy time. On Wednesday a young party went out, & this P M another are intending to go.

From the Same. W. MSS.

New Haven July 6^th^ [1829]

* * * I have just this Minute receiv'd yours by M^r^ Woolsey, & am glad your labors in N Y are drawing to a close. The weather here has been too cold for comfort, & yesterday the Ladies in Church were all dress'd with shawls. I think it is growing warmer & that summer will come at last. poor William! I wish he had more decision of Character, what will become of him? I shall send this by M^r^ Tappan, if he is not already gone.

Yours affectionately

From Abraham Webster. W. MSS.

Lebanon January 26th 1830

Dear Brother

I received your letter dated in N York some time last summer since that I have heard nothing from you. I therefore conclude nothing has transpired in your family worthy of notice. It appears that you are still eagerly engaged in making Books can you not say as did Solomon 'of making many books there is no end & much study is a weariness of the flesh' I have seen your Dictionary at Websters book store in Albany it pleased me well but you know I am not [a] compatant judg[e] of its merits. I learn however by Newspapers that it meets the approbation of liturary characters. I fondly hope it may be of great use in the learned world & that you may have the consolation of finding that you have not laboured so long to no purpose

Ever since we parted with you at your house I have cherished a hope that I should see you once more in this life but if it is the will of Providence that I do not may I cordi[al]ly submit I have sold my possession in this town and expect next summer to remove to Chatauqua County on Lake Erie, this may surprize you but I can say I have not done it without due consideration & advice. You will wish to know my reasons for doing thus. I will tell that since the Death of my son my property has been gradually diminishing by reason of my farm not being properly managed. not being able to labour myself for twelve years past the farm has been cultivated by hireing or let[t]ing it on shares and it has not yielded me a sufficiency to meet the expenses of my family & pay the interest of money I owed. I bought $300 worth of wood land four years ago which was needfull to be annexed to the farm for fencing timber and such indeed the farm would have sold for but little without wood & timber My creditors did not press me so hard but that I might have kept my farm longer but I could

not pay the interest much less the principle of course my debts were daily incr[e]asing & if I had been taken away as my circumstances were probably my farm would not have been sold for two thirds the amount of what it now brings me. Another reason why I wish to leave this town is the Morgan affair has caused such excitement in the Church & society that it has destroyed all harmony and thre[a]tens our destruction. We have a worthy Clergyman living in this town but the antimasonic party will not suffer him to preach altho he has renounced all connections with the Masons

My G. son Frederick continues his studies with Doctor Burroughs (our parish physician) & we believe he improves well he is desirous of attending a Medical institution next fall we hear that such an Institution is Established in New Haven & he believes it will be less expensive to go there than to N York he will feel gratefull to you if you will make enquiry about the situation of the establishment & the probable expense per month for board & tuition and let us know as soon as convenient He is a poor Boy his Father is unable to assist him Doc^{t} B has agreed to instruct him untill he is qualifyed to commence practice & wait for his pay untill he is able to make it

We hear often from my Son in Law Bradley at Chatauqua he has taken another wife & he writes us his children are pleased with her we wish she may fill the place of my dear Departed Daughter to the satisfaction of all the connections M^{r} Bradley has two of his youngest children with him, Livinia the oldest Daughter a Mil[l]iner has established herself in the Village of Westfield has one of her sisters [as] an apprentice Julia the second Daughter is with her Aunt at Buffalo

The forepart of this winter was very mild very little snow but now we have it very severe it snows every day more or less the wind blows & snow flies briskly, the Beasts shiver with the cold and seek for shelter

My health is about the same as in winters past I labour a little every day exersize is better for me than sit[t]ing idle by the fire side, My wife has something of a cough but most of the time enjoys pretty good health.

a Little Boy lives with us, so we have three in the family I was at Litchfield in Conn last August my business required haste & could go no further

My Grand Daughter Sophia Blair is at Litchfield attending school My Wife joins with me in love to you and Sister & all your family connections

A pleasant side of the busy scholar's life is shown in his taking time to correspond in Latin with his grandchild, Emily Ellsworth Fowler, who was then aged four years. One such letter still extant we give:

To Emily Ellsworth Fowler.[1]

(Copy.) Novo Portu, Feb'y. die nono 1830

Carissima Nepte.

Epistola vestra, in Latina lingua scripta, a me recepta et perlecta est. Ago tibi gratias pro hoc testimonio amoris vestri. Hic amor est mihi gratissimus. Magna pars epistolæ est recte composita. Gaudeo scire quo modo fratres vestri occupati sunt, sive ludendo, sive edendo, et noscere totam familiam patris vestri sanitate fui; præcipue matrem tuam convalescere.

Nostra familia in hoc statu est. Ego otio puor sine dignitati. Avita vestra semper 'incumbit acui,'—illa calligas resarcit, et alias vestes; Maria est absens, in visendo amicos nostros in urbe Harfordiense. Matertera vestra Goodrich, aegrotu fuit, dolore acritissimo in maxilla. Hic morbus

[1] Through the courtesy of my sister, Mrs. Richmond Mayo-Smith.—[Ed.]

ticlu appellata est, in lingua Gallica, *tigue*—Illa nunc valet.

Perge, dilecta puella, in studio laudabile literorum, et opto te felicam esse.

Vale sic vocit Avus vester [1]

From Abraham Webster. W. MSS.

Sullivan June 1st 1830 Madison County

Dear Brother

when I wrote to you last I told you that I expected to remove to the County of Chatauqua in the spring but I found my friends universally desided against my going such a distance at my advanced age and on mature deliberation & a desire to make the short time that I have to live most comfortable I gave up the idea of removing to the west & have fixed my residence in this town. I thought it well to let you know where I might be found in case you should come this way in the course of the summer. Enquire at Canasaraga Village in the Town of Sullivan there is a post Office in this

[1] (Translation.) New Haven, Feb. ninth day 1830

Dearest grand daughter,

Your letter, written in the latin language has been received and read by me. I give you thanks for this testimony of your love. This affection is most grateful to me. The greater part of the letter is correctly written. I rejoice to know, how your brothers are occupied, whether playing or eating, and to learn that the whole family of your father is well; especially that your mother is convalescent.

Our family is in this state. I enjoy ease without office. Your grandmother always reclines, sewing, she patches shoes and other garments. Mary is absent, visiting our friends in the city of Hartford. Your great aunt Goodrich has been ill, with a most severe pain in the jaw. This disease is called tick, in the French language tigue. She is now well.

Continue dear girl, the praiseworthy study of language and I wish you to be happy

Farewell, your grandfather so called

Village where Letters to me may be directed. We live on the great road leading from Utica to Buffalo & about one & half mile from the Canal My Daughter who married Mr Adams is in Vernon 18 miles east of this place We do hope you will come here this summer & bring sister with you. What pleasure would it give us to see you once more in this life. If we ever meet again on earth it must be soon our days are almost numbered you have lived beyond what is called the ordinary age of man & I fall but little short of fourscore May God give us grace that we may 'so number our days as to apply our Hearts unto wisdom'

I remain pretty much in the same state of health as I have been for several years past My Wife enjoys tollarable health —she has Connections in this town which was one reason of our coming Do write to us soon & let us know whether you are coming or not

Accept of our sincere Affection

From ABRAHAM WEBSTER. W. MSS.

Sull[ivan] Oct[r] 13th 1830

DEAR BROTHER

I have seen Mr Sherman since he returned from N Haven he told me he saw you & that [you] got home safely & were in tollerable health This cheered us as we were solitious [solicitous] for Sister on account of her ill health We were greately disapointed that you did not call on us when you returned from the west But He who orders all our ways saw best that we should not see each other at that time (probably we never shall in this life) May I cordi[a]lly acquiesce in whatever He directs

F Bradley is here this morning he intends to set off next week to attend Medical Lectures either in N York or N Haven should he call on you I wish you to assist him in whatever he may need in regard to finding a place to board in some good family he will need your watch and advice

which I doubt not you will cheerfully give out of regard you have for our family connections

My health has been much the same as when you was here untill three or four day past I think I worked too hard gathering my potatoes My Wife is in usual health and sends much love to Sister

Your Affectionate Brother

Finding that his efforts toward copyright were unavailing, he went to the capital in 1830, and with the assistance of his son-in-law, William W. Ellsworth, who was a Congressman from Connecticut, succeeded in getting a new law which was more liberal to authors.

Thus American writers may thank him for a great boon in this law, imperfect though it be.[1] He finished his own account of the 'Origin of the copyright laws of the United States' in his printed papers in these words: 'In my journeys to effect this object, and in my long attendance in Washington, I expended nearly a year of time. Of my expenses in money I have no account; but it is a satisfaction to me that a liberal statute for securing to authors the fruits of their labor has been obtained.'[2]

[1] Written between 1885 and 1892.

[2] *Collection of Papers*, 178.

'It is interesting to note that the earliest action by the States and Congress received its impulse from Webster's spelling-book; the later and final form of the law was adopted in connection with Mr. Webster's indefatigable efforts, and the first book to take advantage of it was his "American Dictionary."' *Noah Webster*, Horace E. Scudder, p. 67.

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Washington. Dec 14. 1830.

Dear Becca

I arrived here last evening, & have taken a small room at Mr. Fletcher's, next to Emily's.[1] This is very pleasant.

My cold has proved pretty severe The influenza has affected my head, & my lungs have been oppressed. I remained two days at Baltimore, & find myself somewhat relieved. My cold is digesting & my appetite is good. I hope therefore to experience no serious inconvenience from this visitation.

I have your favor with the inclosures. As to William, it is probable he will come & see me, & he must have a pair of pantaloons. It rains, as it has done half the time since I left home. I have seen none of our friends here & shall not go abroad till the weather is better.

As to Mr. Hartley, I told you before I left home, though I believe you forgot it, that my Spelling books in New York were all sold, before he applied to me; though I did not know it at the time.

As to questions of genealogy, they must remain till I return. I am told D. Webster has not yet arrived in Washington.

I am rejoiced that Mr. Fowler has regained his health, & that little William[2] is spared. Emily appears to be in very good health & in spirits. She will write all about her visits & leaving cards. There are three or four other ladies in the family & the time may be made to pass pleasantly. Mr. E. is preparing a new Copy-right bill & a report on the subject, which I hope will be laid before Congress early in the session. I hope you will all remain in health & safety, & I hope to hear good accounts from Louisa & Mary.

Give my love to all our families.

Your affectionate Husband,

[1] Mrs. William Wolcott Ellsworth.

[2] William Worthington Fowler, the third child of Harriet Webster Fowler.

To the Same. W. MSS.

Washington Decr 17 1830

Dear Becca.

My cold is gradually abating. my lungs are much relieved; but the catarrh in my head makes it feel like a cook'g turnip. Yesterday & to-day I have taken a short walk, but I shall make no calls, till I feel better. Judge Cranch has called on me, as have Eliott & his Wife[1] & your brother James. Mrs. Eliott looks almost as young as ever & it is hardly credible that she is a grandmother.

We have a family of N. England persons, except Senator Grundy from Tennessee. Mr. Reid & wife, Mr. Richardson & wife, & Mr. Evans & wife from Massachusetts. I have a snug room with a fire, & pass most of my time alone & not able to read much on account of my eyes which are affected by the influenza. Emily is now abroad making calls & delivering cards. This is no small business. She says she has some cold, but is pretty well. It is pretty cold; the last night made considerable ice. I shall be glad to hear from you often, & know your welfare, & what sort of weather you have. I shall say little about my stay here. If I can effect the object, or contribute to it, for which I am striving, the absence of a few weeks is a thing of no moment. Mr. Grundy has doubts about passing a *general* law for securing literary property, as long as the bill proposes, but he says he will grant *me* almost anything, 40 years perhaps, for my great labors. But most of the members of Congress seem not to have considered the subject, & we shall know more of their opinions when the report is made & published.

Love to all our dear relations,

Yours with sincere affection,

[1] A daughter and son-in-law of William Cranch.

From Mary Webster Southgate. W. MSS.

[Undated. Presumably about December 20th 1830.]

Dear and hond Father [1]

I am happy to write you a few lines in mothers Letter. I thank you for the books which are complete. My Thumb is nearly well so that I can write a little every day. You would be pleas'd to see how neat the Garden looks. We shall Have a large supply of string Beans & cucumbers. The [illegible] worms have eaten the melons but mama has replanted them—I have promis'd to collect all the garden seeds This season & mama will give me a cent or two for each sort The little baby is [illegible] verry well. It comes over and shakes dada to your Picture.

I am dear Father

Your affectionate daughter

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster.

(On the same sheet.) Saturday P M

Dear Husband

Mary has not succeeded so well as I expected, but as this is her first attempt at small hand, you will excuse all defects. Professor Gibbs handed me your letter on Wednesday eveg. I was glad to hear from Eliza, or rather *of her*. The weather is chilly, & I have to warm myself at the kitchen fire frequently. Julia is well, the babe rather drooping, but not sick. My appetite gains slowly, & my friends say that I look much better. Mr Sanford goes to New York either this eveg, or Monday morng I shall expect a line from you when he returns. I am pleas'd that the Great folks take such an interest in your book, & hope the *great* man [2] mention d in your letter will be proud of his name for the sake of your labors. Accept the love of all

Your affate wife

[1] In reality she was a granddaughter. [2] Daniel Webster.

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Washington Jan^{y} 7. 1831

Dear Becca

Emily & I have just returned from the Capitol, & we were in the gallery when the House of Rep^{vs} passed the Copyright bill, without a division. It is believed the bill will meet with no obstacles in the Senate. By this bill, authors &c have an absolute exclusive right in their works for 28 years, with the right of renewal to them, their widows & children for 14 more. I have reason to think my presence here has been very useful in this affair; & I rejoice very much in the result. If the bill should pass in the Senate, it will add very much to the value of my property.

I begin to be invited to parties, but shall avoid them as much as possible, except those which are given by N. England people. We go to-day, I believe, to Dr. Sewall's. I am invited to Mr. Ingham's next week, & as the house is opposite my lodgings, I shall go with our family, but it is all disagreeable to me; & as I wish to avoid parties I have called on none of the heads of departments, & foreign ministers. Love to all.

Most affectionately yours,

To the Same. W. MSS.

Washington, Jan^{y} 26. 1831

My dear Becca,

I had hoped before this to have communicated the news of the passage of the Copyright bill; but I am disappointed. There are yet five or six bill[s] before it on the calendar; & it may not come to its turn for several days. But I rest more contented on account of the weather, which renders it unsafe for me to travel. The thermometer has been several days down to 10 & 8° above zero; & this morning at 6° ditto. This is an extraordinary winter here, but the snow now thaws a little in the sun.

I am obliged to be very cautious not to strain or expose my weak back; & I suppose it would be impossible for me to bear a journey in the public stages. When I shall leave this city, I cannot fortell; but I shall rather remain here all February than to leave my business unfinished, if it *can* be done; or expose myself to the severity of the winter.

Your last letter is to me & Emily. You do not mention the purchase of any pork, & I have not thought to put you in mind of it. I am apprehensive you will be destitute the year coming. I am sorry you did not get a load or two of wood before the great snow, but it may yet be practicable.

Tell Julia her advice is very good; but perhaps not needed. If anything could give me a higher relish for plain living than my own domestic comfort, it would be the customs that prevail here.

I keep myself much at home, by a good fire in my bed room. I dined at the Presidents,[1] & had an invitation to an evening party of six or seven hundred at Mr. Ingham's. I do not know Mr. Ingham, but his wife runs in to see our ladies, as she lives opposite to us, & I was introduced to her, & invited, I suppose on Mr. & Mrs. Ellsworth's account. I know none of the heads of departments & shall call on none of them. So I go abroad very little; I have taken tea with two or three N. England families & this evening we are all going to Mr. Elliott's.

William writes that since he was here he & most of the family have had the Influenza.

Mr. Goodrich writes that Mr. Converse[2] came here at his suggestion to aid the Copy-right bill. *Fortunately* the bill had passed the House of Representatives before he arrived. A more unpopular man could not be selected; & if any

[1] Andrew Jackson.—[Ed.]

[2] Of New Haven. He was the publisher of the *American Dictionary*, between whom and Webster there was already much animus on account of the abridged edition, 1829. See *Bibliography*, below.—[Ed.]

opposer of the bill had stated to the house how Mr. C. has used or abused his *monopoly* (as it is called) of my dictionary, he probably would have defeated the bill. I hope no knowledge of it will reach the Senate. Two days ago a Gentleman from Boston asked me where he could get a copy of my Quarto. He said he could not get it at the booksellers and knew not where to find it. I will not trouble myself to write what I know, nor express my feelings on this subject; & I hope Mr. Goodrich will not write to me on the subject any more. The truth is not one fifth part of the United States are supplied with the books.

Mr. Converse is contemplating to get aid in publishing the old Colonial Papers & records & talks of going to every State in the Union to get the papers, & then to go to England. And this day Mr. Ingersoll has presented a petition of his for the privilege of stereotyping & publishing the laws of the U. States. You see by this how much of his business is with the Copy-right bill.

Mr. E. has a letter from Mr. G. for Converse; but whether he is yet in the city or not I do not know. I have not seen him & hope I shall not.

I rejoice at the health of all my dear family & friends. Love to all from

Your affectionate husband,

To the Same. W. MSS.

Washington Feb^{y} 3 1831

My dear Becca,

The bill for enlarging copy-right has been enrolled, & is I suppose, with the President. When published, I will send a copy to Mr. Goodrich.

Yesterday we had a fair day & the snow thawed considerably. Now it is snowing fast, so that there is no present prospect of the termination of winter. I see not

but I must remain here for some days still. I feel some anxiety respecting the supply of wood. I think the dry wood in the wood house must be nearly exhausted. If I was at home, I should now purchase three or four cords of wood, mostly hickory, & let it lie till the snow is gone, & then saw & split it. This however would depend on the goodness of the sledding. If the market is well supplied, I could wish Mr. Goodrich or Mr. Sanford would do me the favor to purchase such wood for me. I will send you another check for money, if it is wanted. I wish not to let the snow be melted before I am supplied—at least if the canal is like to fail, as I am informed. On these subjects I wish you to consult Mr. Goodrich & by no means suffer the wood to be exhausted before a new supply is obtained. The winter is considered here as very extraordinary. The Potowmak is covered with ice to its mouth.

The weather & the walking are so unfavorable that I seldom go abroad, except once in a while to the capitol to hear the debates.

Mr. Eliott has had a child very sick, but yesterday he was a little better—the lung fever.

This morning died in our family, a little boy, nephew of our landlord, with an obstinate sore throat, the consequence, I believe, of a cold. He was of the size of William Goodrich, & very much like him.

When I was in New York, D^{r} Ives told me that an agent of Mr. Converse had told him most palpable falsehoods, stating that *I* had sent him to him. I have forgotten the particulars but will endeavor to obtain them, on my return. I paid not much attention to this information, until the other day, Mr. Evans, a member of congress from Maine, a fellow-lodger in our family, informed me that an agent of Mr. Converse, probably the same man, applied to him to purchase one of my dictionaries, & told him that I desired him to call on him, representing that I was acquainted with him, Mr. Evans, & would be glad to see him at my

house. This was last winter, when I had never heard of such a man as Mr. Evans.

This information astonishes me,—it is possible that the same thing may have happened in other cases. It had the effect with Mr. Evans to disgust him, & he would not buy a book. On being informed of the truth & becoming acquainted with me, he says he will buy a copy of the Quarto. It is very possible that this lying agent has done me injury in other places.

Emily is in pretty good health, though she sometimes feel the worse for being at parties.

I hope kind providence will still protect us & that I may soon return in health & safety.

My love be with all the families,

Your affectionate

husband.

P. S. Mr. Eliott's child is not so well.

To the Same.

W. MSS.

Washington Feb^{y} 7. 1832[1]

My dear Becca.

Yours of the first inst is rec'd but not in time to enable me to answer Mary's request. The mails are irregular, being sometimes delayed by snow or the ice in the rivers. But Mary may be assured that I think of her often, as I do of you all, & I rejoice that you are in health & safety.

I have enclosed a newspaper to Mr. Goodrich containing the Copy-right law. My great object is now accomplished, & as soon as the weather moderates a little, I shall leave Washington—Mr. E. Goodrich's opinion to the contrary notwithstanding.

I think it best for you to get some wood as I wrote in my last letter, if you can find any person who will take the trouble. I am sorry to be obliged to ask this favor; but if

the sledding is good, the market will be well supplied. Perhaps Mr. Fowler will do me this favor. If you should engage any person to do this, I have furnished the means by a check on the other side.

The snow & the severe cold continue.

We have all been to the capitol today to hear Mr. Burgess declaim against paying John Randolph a salary. Mr. B. says he is not our minister, while in England, & that he has done no service for us in Russia. The debate is not yet concluded.

I am happy to hear of an accession to our church, & that H. White is of the number.

I have heard of Barth's fate—but not of Forbes death.

Mr. Eliott has lost a child, I believe, about three years old. It was buried yesterday.

My love to all—from

Your Affectionate Husband,

P. S. I wish you to pay for a pair of shoes for Lucy[1] to replace those stolen.

W. MSS.

[Undated.]

Dear Parents.[2]

As the money lent to William[2] is now lost, we are desirous to be considered as assuming the consequences of

[1] Lucy Griffen, the maid. See Appendix XXXVIII below.

[2] William Greenleaf Webster had made an unsuccessful venture in business, by which he lost the loan made to him by his father. He married Rosalie Eugenia Stuart on May 5th, 1831. [See Appendix XXXIX, below.] They had two sons who fought on opposing sides in the Civil War. The Confederate was killed in battle, the other died of fever.

William G. Webster was again in financial difficulties in 1836, at which time Webster wrote as follows :

'New Haven May 3. 1836

'Dear William

'*** Our love to Rosalie. May you have wisdom & fortitude to encounter troubles. This is the prayer of

'Your affectionate father'

one half of this loss, by paying the interest of $1500 a year, until the proceeds of the Dictionary shall be an interest for your use; and as much longer as your convenience shall dictate.

We are very affectionately and dutifully
Your children

CHAUNCEY A GOODRICH
JULIA W GOODRICH

From 1830 onward Webster was active in the cause of education in Connecticut. He presided at Teachers' Conventions in Hartford and elsewhere. He was an interested member of the Society for the Improvement of Common Schools, and was a constant correspondent with the Hon. Henry Barnard, LL.D., who was Superintendent for Connecticut. He still wrote with vigor, and his memory was clear and precise.

From E. H. BARKER.

W. MSS.

Thetford, Norfolk, England,
March 29, 1832.

DEAR SIR,

You have perhaps by this time received a copy of the *Prospectus* of Boucher's *Glossary*: if not, you will receive two copies herewith. Our printer, M^r. R. Taylor, is conversant with Anglo-Saxon literature, and has promised to pay great attention to the work himself. His additions have caused a delay in the appearance of our *first* N^o., which is now destined for publication on April 1^st. & he thinks that he can manage to fetch up some of the lost time. I think that you will be much pleased with the work, which includes what could not with any great propriety be introduced into your work. You will observe that the sub-

scription closes on the publication of the 4th. N°.; & if any of your friends like to subscribe, let them pay you for the N^os., as they appear, & the amount, which you receive in this way, will be in the nature of a remittance made to you by me on account of your share in our English reprint of your *Dictionary*. But, while your friends will of course pay to you the *full* price £3. 3. 0. we shall charge a copy to you *at the trade price* only £2. 7. 3. You will send the names of any subscribers with their proper addresses, that we may make *right* entries in the list of subscribers. I should think that among your friends in New York & elsewhere, you will find many, who will subscribe through you, & thus put an advantage into your hands without injury to themselves. The copies can be sent, not all to you, but to the parties themselves, through the channels, which you point out. We shall *present* you with a copy for yourself, of course. Your directions were attended to, viz. to forward to you a copy of your Dictionary well bound, and to M^r. J. Miller a copy for himself. I gave the orders to M^r. Black,[1] & I take for granted that they were executed. The sale of the work goes on, & after the Reform Bill is past, & our domestic affairs are in a more settled state, we may do much better. M^r. Black has sold 50 *complete* copies since the commencement of the new year. On reading the *Prospectus* to *Boucher's Glossary*, you will see that those persons, who subscribe to it, are allowed to have our reprint of your book at the *original* subscription price, £4. 5. 6. & the *present* price is £5. 10. 0. *in boards*. We find that many persons here subscribe to the *Boucher* in order to get your work at the *original* subscription price. I think that in less than 12 months we shall have covered all our expenses, & be in a condition to make a remittance to you as the first-fruits of your share. The advertising alone cost us £350 or nearer £400, because the duty on

[1] Of Black, Young & Black, printers of this English edition of the *Dictionary*. See *Bibliography*, below.—[Ed.]

advertisements is heavy. I duly rec^{d}. the notices, which you sent of your work, & M^{r}. Black undertook to have them used in *Fraser's Magazine*, which is a clever & rising periodical, but in it they have not yet appeared. However, M^{r}. Black assures me that they will appear there. Even in this country it is not easy to find persons, who can fill up the outline. We sent copies of your work to the *Edinburgh* & *Quarterly Reviews*, but no critique on it has appeared in either. I continue to make collections for a *second* edition. You mentioned that a gentleman had *offered* to you a collection of words for insertion: was it from Professor Allen of Bowdoin College, Brunswick, State of Maine? He wrote to M^{r}. Black, & tendered for a pecuniary consideration 14 or 1500 words. But, as you know, we had no *space* for additions. However, it may be worth your while to communicate with Mr. Allen.

Hoping that you enjoy good health, I remain, dear Sir, with respect & esteem,

Most truly yours.

From Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

New Haven August 6th [1832?]

Dear Husband

I promisd you a line ten days after you left us, this is the 11th.[1] Thro' the blessing of a kind Providence we are all, Lucy excepted, in comfortable health. *She* has had a relapse in consequence of attending the morn^{g} service at Church yesterday; as she was so well last week & able, with my assistance to do the light work of the family I did not object to her going, but it was communion day & the service very long. She fainted, & is now so weak that

[1] Almost annually he traveled about New England visiting his daughters. A postscript in a letter from his wife reads: [17th August, 1834] 'I hope you will not ride when you are the least indisposed—pray take care of yourself & dont eat apple pie for supper.'

she cannot sit up. She has had no fits & I hope she will escape them if she keeps quiet. It is very painful to her to sit by & see me hard at work. You wou'd have smiled, could you have seen our bustle this morn^g^

rose at half past five made a fire & put on the Tea-kettle & while I was sweeping the room below, R. set the breakfast table & made some tea & toast, with eggs. Lute clean'd the knives & help d me wash the dishes, beside acting as nurse to Lucy. The weather is oppressively hot, & has been so, for a number of days. We have had several thunder showers, but the air is close & unelastic, people remark that there is an uncommon closeness in the air, & the perspiration of the body is gummy. we are greatly a[n]noyed by Musketos which have appear d within a few days. I scarcely ever knew so many, but we have few flies, & no red, or black ants.

The destroying angel has not been commission'd to pass through our streets as yet, & our Citizens enjoy better health *now* than at any time since last October. Many are complaining but few are *hard* sick & I do not recollect more than three funerals since your departure. M^rs^ Barney was one of them, a stranger who died of Consumption, & a little boy who was drown'd in the Canal were the other two.

M^r^ G has had a low billious fever, he is now gaining, & rides out, but does not go to College; the young Students who are to perform at Commencement recite to him as he reclines on the bed, or sofa. I hope a journey will restore him, if the duties of preparing for the approaching season do not prostrate him intirely. We receiv'd your New Milford letter on Wednesday. Since then, I heard of you *thro Emily* at Stockbridge; this comforts me a little, but still we are anxious about you this warm weather; write us as often as you have oppertunity. We calculate that you will be in Middlebury at Commencement—I think it will be on the 15^th^, the same day as ours. Where shall I direct my

next letter? And when shall you return? I felt so lonely the first night after you left us, that I did not sleep. Louisa solicited hard to sleep with me, & I find it a mutual convenience, for we have had thunder several times in the night, & if she had not been with *me*, I shou'd have been summoned up stairs to *her* for her terror at lightning appears to be increasing every year. William is in better health, but has to be very careful of his diet. Rosalie & I eat whatever comes to hand. Whortleberry pudding is the order of the day, at present, of this, we all freely partake, but abstain from all fruit uncook'd. Our neighbors are all well, except Mrs Isham who is not expected to survive many days. We have had a visit from Dr Barret, he went to New York to gain knowledge respecting the treatment of Cholera, & was taken while there, with an inflamation of the stomach & bowels which nearly ended his existence. the Physicians bled him so profusely that he looks like a corps[e]. Mr Goodrich look'd like a healthy man by the side of him; He has gone on to Green field to visit his sister. I have just received a letter from Eliza. She writes that Julia, & her waiting maid, have had the measles, & she expects that Emily & four of her boarders will have it in due time, when all are safely thro with it, she will make us a visit & she hopes this will be in about a fortnight, by this time, I trust, dear Rosalie will be happily thro her difficulties.

Mr E & Emily have been on to Greenfield, we expect them here soon. Dr Barret is recovering fast. He was delighted to see Mary look so healthy & fat.

Mr Staples call'd to see you last Week. I have had several pleasant rides lately with W. Ellsworth & Miss Houghton & feel *all* the better for them. I shou'd like to ride every pleasant day if it was convenient, for short rides benefit my health more than long journeys. I have not strength enough at present to bear them, but on the whole, I have more strength & better health than when I return'd from Greenfield.

Lucy will go home & spend a few weeks to recruit her strength when I can get some one to supply her place. I dispose of her services at present, but dare not be left quite without help, at this critical time.

Accept the love of all, in both families for yourself & the dear friends at Middlebury

Your very affectionate Wife

William has forwarded three newspapers containing *puffs*. Dont let them puff you up too much.

To William G. Webster. W. MSS.

Middlebury Aug^t 17. 1832

* * * The managers of the Commencement Ball sent me a polite note, informing me that they should be much gratified by my attendance. Pretty well for a man of *seventy four!* But I was better entertained at home.[1] * * *

To the Same. W. MSS.

Middlebury, Friday 24 Aug^t 1832

Dear William.

I rode on Wednesday to New Haven 8 miles & attended a Sunday School meeting where M^r Fowler delivered an address. I then went to Vergennes intending to proceed the next day to Burlington & thence towards Connecticut river, by the Onion river road. But beginning to grow weary of riding, & wishing to shorten the journey, I returned here yesterday, very much to the surprize of my friends. I propose now to remain here till Monday & then cross the Mountain & go to the Connecticut by the White river road.

The night I was at Vergennes, a lady by the name of

[1] Addressed: Middlebury Vermont To the care of Prof Fowler who is requested to break the seal if M^r W is not there.

Sutton, who with her Sister left New York some weeks ago to avoid the Cholera, was seized with the disease & died in a few hours. A young man was also ill with the complaint, when I left the place, & I am informed since that one or two more have been seized. The origin of this calamity was in a party of pleasure, which took place the day preceding. A party was invited to take a passage or trip to Burlington in a new Steamer. The boat disappointed them—it did not arrive at Burlington till 3 o clock—the party dined late & probably in a luxurious stile, the boat did not return to Vergennes till 12 o clock at night, & the passengers were exposed to the night air. The next day, some of them were seized with diarrhea. One is dead—what is to be the fate of others, we do not yet know.

I am in pretty good health, & hope to proceed homeward moderately in safety.

As I do not go to Haverhill, a letter, if you have sent one, will not be received. The first place where a letter from home will probably meet me is Greenfield.

Mr Fowler & family are in usual health.

My love be with you all.

Your affectionate Father

In 1833 Webster carried out his long-felt wish by publishing his revised version of the Bible.[1]

[1] See Bibliography below.

Webster's reasons for undertaking the work are given in the preface to this edition dated New Haven, September, 1833.

'In the present version the language is, in general, correct and perspicuous; the genuine popular English of Saxon origin, peculiarly adapted to the subjects; and in many passages uniting sublimity with beautiful simplicity. In my view, the general style of the version ought not to be altered. But in the lapse of two or three centuries changes have taken place, which in particular passages, impair the beauty; in others, obscure the sense of the original languages. Some words have fallen into disuse; and the signification of others, in current popular

He showed his prescience in this attempt, and, as had been the habit of his life, he was ahead of his times. After this effort, the necessity of a revision of the Bible deepened yearly in the minds of those who studied the subject, until the religious, scholarly element of England and America demanded the work. Less than forty years after his labors in this direction, a company of learned divines under the sanction of the See of Canterbury in

use, is not the same now as it was when they were introduced into the version. The effect of these changes is, that some words are not understood by common readers who have no access to commentaries, and who will always compose a great proportion of readers; while other words, being now used in a sense different from that which they had when the translation was made, present a wrong signification or false ideas. Whenever words are understood in a sense different from that which they had when introduced, and different from that of the original languages, they do not present to the reader the Word of God. This circumstance is very important, even in things not the most essential, and in essential points, mistakes may be very injurious.

'In my own view of this subject, a version of the Scriptures for popular use should consist of words expressing the sense which is most common in popular usage, so that the first idea suggested to the reader should be the true meaning of such words, according to the original language. That many words in the present version fail to do this is certain. My principal aim is to remedy this evil.'

Webster came to these conclusions naturally from his investigations in language, studying the Hebrew chiefly through the Old Testament. With him to see that a thing ought to be done was almost tantamount to his undertaking it himself if he felt qualified to attempt it, but he was preoccupied at that time. The idea had slumbered in his mind—never dead—but covered up by other work for a decade, until his *Dictionary* being complete for the time and given to the world, his thought reverted to his old project. Before commencing the revision he had written to some of the prominent clergymen who were leaders of thought in their various denominations, and received from many of them encouragement for the work.

England, joined with a company of theologians and linguists in America to perfect a revision of the Old and New Testaments. Whether that revision, sent out to the public after fourteen years of anxious and varied study of the minds best trained for the purpose in Great Britain and America, will be generally accepted, is not yet decided.[1] If a work of such authority and sent out under such auspices lingers on the booksellers' shelves, the fate of Webster's revision was predicated beforehand. It had no great success, and is little known to-day, yet the sincerity and value of the attempt has often been recognized.

For many years[2] it has been the fashion among a certain class, who were sometimes ignorant, or rather half learned, and sometimes bookmakers greedy for gain, to revile Webster's works and accuse him of self-conceit; this class made the revision of the Bible their stronghold of attack. The reproach of personal vanity that he, *one man*, should undertake to improve King James' revision was shouted through the land. Now the most successful versions of the Holy Word, the popular and diffused versions, which went in secret from hand to hand—when to read them was to put oneself under sentence of death—were all the work of one man, that man being either Luther, or Wickliffe, Tyndale, Coverdale, Matthew, or Whitechurch, as the case may be. The 'Bishop's Bible,' as King James' revision was called, simply changed the ambigu-

[1 & 2] Written between 1885 and 1892.—[Ed.]

ous or obsolete language of imperfect translation by a comparison of these different translators; removed coarse or unintelligible expressions; elucidated meanings of Scripture; cleared up difficulties; and removed discrepancies, but it was not a new translation.

It was in a deep spirit of reverence for the Bible that Webster wrought. Feeling its defects in expression he sought to remove and improve them, but he wrought in the same spirit as his predecessors, Luther and Wickliffe, and wished to contribute of his knowledge to the language and translation of Holy Writ for the good of mankind.

It would be strange if nothing had been gained in Biblical knowledge in two centuries and a half. Perfection, if reached by the 'Bishop's Bible' in its time, had developed a higher ideal in these long periods of Bible reading and study, and it is fair to prophesy that in two centuries and a half more the new translation will be examined with devout reverence and critical skill, whether it be by *one man* or by a company of scholars.

Moreover, the alterations of Webster are not nearly as numerous nor as marked as those of the Committee of Revision. His was the gentle removal from the face of a friend of the accidental smouch or defacement, done with a loving and tender hand. He led in the direction in which the revisers followed, but his love for the strong, simple Anglo-Saxon language made him stop far short of their changes, and

in many ways they have gone far beyond him. Doubtless the combined wisdom of many educated minds may arrive at large results, yet there must always be compromise where many work together, and compromises are not convictions. The work of the individual has always more harmony, consistency, and directness than the work of separate minds combined.

To Daniel Webster.[1]

New Haven, Sept. 6. 1834

Sir,

I understand by the public prints that you have been charged with saying, 'Let Congress take care of the rich, the rich will take care of the poor.' In reply to a letter from Mr. Brooks of Portland, you have contradicted the statement, by which it appears to be false and groundless. I confess, Sir, I am mortified that the propagation of such a calumny, and its reception by a portion of the people, should make it necessary for a gentleman of your character to deny the charge. I am mortified that men can be found, in this country, *weak* enough to suppose you, or any respectable man, capable of the meanness which could dictate such a declaration, or *wicked* enough to propagate it, knowing it to be false. Yet it is not improbable our country contains multitudes of persons who may fall under both descriptions.

But, Sir, this is only a different form of expression, which I have known to be used, for more than half a century, to discredit the best men that ever adorned the councils of the United States. My age carries back my recollections farther than yours. In the year 1783, I commenced, as a political writer, a vindication of the measures of the Old

[1] Reprinted from *The American Historical Review*, vol. ix. No. 1, Oct., 1903.

Congress, in favor of the army. To make good the losses of the army by receiving depreciated bills in payment of their wages, and preventing a dissolution of the army, Congress granted to the officers half pay for life; which grant, to appease the popular clamor against *pensions*, was afterwards commuted for five years full pay. This grant roused an opposition among the more jealous republicans of that day, which agitated all New England, but was most violent in Connecticut, in which state it came near to cause a revolution. So unreasonable was this spirit of opposition, that the officers of the patriotic army, most of whom were nearly beggared by the loss of their wages, were represented as having enriched themselves by the war of the revolution. They were denounced as *rich* men and *aristocrats*, who had raised themselves to affluence upon the distresses of the people. The same low jealousy which now denounces the bank as a moneyed aristocracy, and rich men as the enemies of the poor, then assailed the brave men who hazarded their lives and property to defend their country, and to whom, under providence, the slanderers were indebted for their liberties, and to whom we owe the independence of the United States.[1]

At that period, and after the present constitution of the U States went into operation, I devoted four or five years almost exclusively to the vindication of the measures of Congress and of the administration of Washington. My employment made it necessary for me to read all the public prints, and of course, to observe all the forms in which the popular jealousy appeared, and all the artifices of the opposers of Washington's administration, who were originally *anti-federalists*, and who, with one heart and all their influence opposed the adoption of the constitution. This party afterward took the title of *republican* or *democratic*, as being less odious than *antifederal*, and with equal

[1] See *A Collection of Papers on Political, Literary and Moral Subjects*, pp. 316-321; also Bibliography below.—[Ed.]

unanimity, opposed the policy of General Washington, during his whole administration.

As early as the year 1783 or 1784, I became acquainted with the practice of exciting popular odium against public men, by propagating slanderous reports similar, in spirit, to that which you have contradicted. The most common slander was that '*A B says the times will never be good, till the poor man is obliged to eat sheep's head and pluck; or a sheep's head and pluck are good enough for poor people.*' In the year 1783, when the opposers of the *commutation* act of Congress combined to dismiss, from the council, the members who had conducted us through the revolution, and who sustained the measures of congress, this slanderous report was circulated against the Hon. Oliver Wolcott of Litchfield, afterward governor of Connecticut, the first governor of that name. The slander had such effect in diminishing his popularity in Litchfield county, that had not the members of that body been chosen by the voters of the whole state, he would have lost his election. Yet from an acquaintance with that gentleman, I can affirm, there was not a more firm whig or upright and patriotic republican in the state.

The same or similar calumnies were circulated against other eminent statesmen, as against the Huntingtons in Norwich. Indeed I have frequently heard the same story told, with little variation for more than fifty years. It is revived, whenever an independent statesman, is to be driven from the public councils by a rival, or by popular jealousy.

You see then that the slanderous story which you have contradicted, is only a *new form* of an *old calumny*, proceeding from the same spirit of jealousy, which is as common as it is ill-founded.

That the poor should envy the rich, even when poverty is the effect of their own idleness and vices, is very natural; as it is immoral and absurd. What would become of the

poor without the rich? How would they subsist, without employment, and how could they be employed, without the capital of the rich?

Who but the wealthy can pay the public expenses? Who can furnish the capital for canals, and railroads, and all other public improvements? The poor, without the aid of the wealthy, would *perish* or be doomed to the life of savages. The rich want the labor of the poor, and the poor must have the support of the rich. There is a mutual dependence, which ought to make the two classes *friends* to each other; and any attempt to make the poor hate the rich is of all the *low tricks* of demagogues the *meanest*, and *most detestable.*

The disposition to defame and libel political opponents is a rampant evil in the United States, and a proof of deep depravity. It appeared soon after the treaty of peace in 1783 had removed the dangers of the country; but broke out in all its violence in the attempts to turn the tide of popular favor from Gen. Washington and his federal friends, in 1793 and 1794.

When the French commenced the reform of their government, the people of this country generally felt a deep interest in their success; and it was hoped and believed that the French would establish a *republican government*, which many of our citizens have thought to be synonymous with a *free government*—an opinion not always verified by facts. When the French Minister Genet arrived in the United States, for the purpose of engaging this country in the war in union with France, a majority of our citizens, certainly a majority in some of the States, wished that his intentions might be realized. They were ready and urgent to have our government join with France in the *war against tyrants.* The policy of Gen. Washington resisted this disposition; he foresaw the danger of such an alliance, which might involve this country in interminable evils; he determined, if possible, to preserve peace; and his

popularity alone enabled him to effect his purpose. Nothing but his *personal influence* prevented the success of Genet; but it was doubtful, for several months, whether Washington or Genet should determine the policy of the United States.

At this time the antifederal party adhered to the policy of the French Minister; and raised loud clamors against President Washington, who was denounced as a partisan of Great Britain, and his federal council and supporters were charged with an undue partiality for monarchy. Two newspapers,[1] one published in Philadelphia and the other in New York, took the lead in traducing Washington and his policy; and never ceased till he left the administration. In the period, between 1793 and 1797, I am persuaded the slanders and misrepresentations published in those papers would amount to the contents of a large octavo volume.

The freedom of the press is a valuable privilege; but the abuse of it, in this country, is a frightful evil. The licentiousness of the press is a deep stain upon the character of the country; and in addition to the evil of calumniating good men, and giving a wrong direction to public measures, it corrupts the people by rendering them insensible to the value of truth and of reputation. Party spirit, indulged to excess has a similar effect, as bigotry in religion, and to blast the reputation of a political adversary, who stands in the way of success, is to do God service. What extreme virulence of partisan malevolence must that have been which could denounce, as traitors to their country, a Washington and a Jay, men of as pure integrity and patriotism, as ever trod the soil of America! But see the proof. In August 1795; the following paragraph appeared in a gazette published in Richmond, Virginia, by one Davis.

'Notice is hereby given, That in case the treaty entered into by that d——d archtraitor J——n J——y, with the

[1] Probably the *Aurora* and the *New York Daily Gazette*.—[Ed.]

British tyrant, should be ratified, a petition will be presented to the next General Assembly of Virginia, their next session, praying that the said state *may recede from the Union*, and be left under the government and protection of *One hundred thousand free and independent Virginians.*

'P. S. As it is the wish of the people of the said State to enter into a treaty of amity, commerce and navigation with any other state or states of the present union, who are averse to returning again under the galling yoke of Great Britain: The printers of the (at present) United States, are requested to publish the above notification.'

This denunciation was published before the writer knew that President Washington had signed and completed the ratification of the treaty.

But the treaty was ratified and went into operation; and notwithstanding all the French partisans, or democratic party had opposed its ratification, in every way, except by the use of physical force, the treaty proved to be not only the means of preserving peace and amity, with Great Britain, but in a commercial view, it was found to be the best treaty we ever had with a foreign power. Its expiration at the end of ten years was extremely regretted.[1]

Now attend to the manner in which the same party treated the great and good Washington.

On the 4th day of March 1797, the day after the last term of Washington's administration expired, the following paragraph appeared in the Aurora, the principal paper which had vilified that excellent man for several years.

'"Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation," was the pious ejaculation of a man who beheld a flood of happiness rushing in upon mankind. If ever there was a time that would license the reiteration of the exclamation, that time has now arrived; for the man who is the source of all the misfortunes of our

[1] *A Collection of Papers on Political, Literary and Moral Subjects*, 179-224.—[Ed.]

country is this day reduced to a level with his fellow citizens, and is no longer possessed of power to multiply evils, upon the United States. If there was ever a period for rejoicing, this is the moment; every heart, in unison with the freedom and happiness of the people, ought to beat high with exultation, that the name of Washington, from this day, ceases to give a currency to political iniquity and to legalize corruption. A new era is now opening upon us; an era which promises much to the people; for public measures must now stand upon their own merits, and nefarious projects can no longer be supported by a name. When a retrospect is taken of the Washingtonian administration for eight years, it is a subject of the greatest astonishment, that a single individual should have cankered the principles of republicanism in an enlightened people, just emerged from the gulf of despotism, and should have carried his designs against the public liberty so far, as to have put in jeopardy its very existence. Such however are the facts, and with these staring us in the face, this day ought to be a jubilee in the United States.'[1]

Is there any way, Sir, to restrain this spirit of slander, which is continually pouring forth libels and defamatory reports against the most intelligent, upright and consistent republican citizen? Must any man and every man, who boldly supports the constitution, according to its true principles, be subjected to insult, and degradation, from intriguers and violent party men? Is there no reward but reproach and infamy, for the purest motives and noblest actions that ever adorn the character of men? I have observed this spirit of calumny and misrepresentation for half a century; I have examined the motives from which it springs, I have seen its effects; and instead of deriving any hopes of reformation from the supposed increasing intelli-

[1] Bache, at that time the editor of the *Aurora*, was the writer of this article. See *Spurious Letters attributed to Washington*, Worthington Chauncey Ford, p. 158, note.

gence of the people, recent facts continually occurring have confirmed my apprehensions that the evil admits of no effectual remedy. Some amendments of the constitution may perhaps abate the evil, by restraining the ambition of office-seekers; but the evil seems to be inseparable from frequent popular elections.

This practice of libeling political opponents, will often drive the best men from public stations, or prevent them from accepting offices; it will generate the most violent animosities between men who have a common interest in the public welfare, and a common attachment to republican forms of government; it will sometimes degrade or render odious the *good*, and exalt the *bad* to popularity and to offices of *honor*, which they will *dishonor* by their vices or their weakness. Many of our public evils may be traced to *deception* practiced upon the people, by calumny and misrepresentations. A majority of our citizens have, in some cases, been wholly mistaken in the characters and designs of their favorite leaders, as well as in the true policy of their measures. Some of these mistakes will last during the present generation; others may be dissipated by the public mischief which they produce.

Of mistakes which pervade a large portion of the community, several instances may be mentioned; but I shall specify one instance only, which is often a theme of declamation and abuse: this is a misapprehension of the origin and design of the Hartford Convention.[1] I mention this, because I was personally concerned, in the origination of it, and am acquainted with every measure that preceded it, and with the men who were the authors of it. I am the more inclined to state the circumstances of its origin, as they seem not to have been known to those who have written in vindication of the measure.

The Hartford Convention in 1814 has been represented as having for its object a dissolution of the Union: and

[1] Cf. Webster, *A Collection of Papers, etc.*, 311-315.—[Ed.]

continued attempts have been made to vilify the men who composed the convention, and thus to destroy their political influence. I *know* the charge against the men concerned in the origin and prosecution of that convention, to be *false.*

The facts respecting the origin of that convention are these. A number of Gentlemen in Northampton, in the county of Hampshire, taking into consideration the distresses of the country, occasioned by the war, and embargo, judged it advisable to invite a meeting of some of the more influential men in the neighboring towns, for the purpose of conversing on the subject, and adopting some measures to manifest the sentiments of the people to the legislature at their approaching session. The result of this conference was, that one of the gentlemen addressed a letter dated January 5, 1814, to several gentlemen in the neighboring towns, requesting them to meet at Northampton on the 19th of that month, 'for the purpose of a free and dispassionate discussion touching our public concerns'; stating also that the legislature which was soon to meet, would probably be gratified to know the feelings and wishes of the people. That letter is now before me.

In compliance with that request, several gentlemen met, and after a free conversation on the calamities of the country, they appointed a committee to prepare a circular address to the several towns in the three counties, Hampshire, Hampdon and Franklin, called the Old county of Hampshire. A printed copy of that address is now before me. The chief complaints urged in this address, against the measures of Congress, are the unconstitutionality of the embargo, the distresses resulting from the interruption of our commerce, and the inequality of the representation of the commercial states in Congress. The following are the concluding paragraphs of that circular.

'We forbear to enumerate all the measures of the federal government, which we consider a violation of the constitu-

tion and encroachments on the rights of the people, and which bear particularly hard upon the commercial people of the north. But we would invite our fellow citizens to consider, whether peace will remedy our public evils, without some amendments of the constitution, which shall secure to the Northern States, their due weight and influence in our national councils.

'The Northern States acceded to the representation of slaves, as a matter of compromise, upon the express stipulation in the constitution, that they should be protected in the enjoyment of their commercial rights. These stipulations have been repeatedly violated, and it cannot be expected that the Northern States should be willing to bear their proportion of the burdens of the federal government, without enjoying the benefits stipulated.

'If our fellow citizens should concur with us in opinion, we would suggest, whether it would not be expedient *for the people in town meetings to address memorials to the General Court at their present session, petitioning that honorable body to propose a convention of all the Northern and Commercial States, by delegates to be appointed by their respective legislatures*, to consult upon measures in concert, for procuring such alterations in the federal constitution as will give to the Northern States a due proportion of representation, and secure them from the future exercise of powers injurious to their commercial interests; or if the general court shall see fit, that they would pursue such other course, as they in their wisdom shall deem best calculated to effect the objects. The measure is of such magnitude that we apprehend a concert of states will be useful, and even necessary to procure the amendments proposed; and should the people of the several towns concur in this opinion, it would be expedient to act on the subject without delay.'

At the time of this meeting I was not a member of the legislature; but I was chosen in the April following.

In compliance with the proposal in this circular, several

town meetings were held. In Northampton, a town meeting was held on the 25th of January, in which it was voted to address a memorial to the legislature then in session, on the subject of the public evils. In this memorial, the town prayed the legislature to take measures to obtain amendments to the constitution, *either by a convention of delegates from the Northern and commercial States*, or in such other way as should be judged suitable.

At a town meeting in Hatfield, held on the 28th of January, a memorial of a like tenor was addressed to the General Court and this contained a like request for a *meeting of delegates from the Northern States* for the same purposes.

A town meeting was held in Deerfield on the 10th of January, which voted a memorial to the General Court, in which the inhabitants petitioned that body to take energetic measures for a redress of grievenances.

A town meeting was held in Amherst on the third of January, and resolutions were passed, enumerating the distresses of the country, and directing the representatives of the town in the General Court, to take the most vigorous measures to put an end to a hopeless war.

These applications were made to the legislature then in session, but as negotiations were then on foot for concluding a treaty of peace with Great Britain, it was judged advisable to postpone any action on them during that Session.

But the negotiation was protracted during the following summer; the affairs of the country grew worse; our shipping was dismantled and perishing in our harbors; the public treasury was exhausted; the banks south and west of New England had suspended specie payments; the coast of Connecticut was blockaded by British ships; a part of Maine was in possession of a British force; and the whole coast of New England was left without any adequate defense. Canada had been invaded and abandoned; battles had been fought on land without any advantage to the cause; and excepting

the triumphant victories of our frigates, nothing but loss and calamity attended a prosecution of the war.

These circumstances induced Governor Strong to summon a special Session of the General Court in October 1814. At this session, the convention was proposed. I was present when the proposal was made, and when it was debated in the House of Representatives. I believed then as I still believe that the measure was justified by the exigencies of that crisis, and that it had a beneficial effect. The spirit displayed on that occasion must have had a beneficial effect in checking the audacious tyranny which subjected us to the most wanton violations of the constitution in prosecuting an unnecessary and fruitless war—a war that cost the United States a hundred millions of dollars and thirty thousand lives, *without gaining one object* for which it was undertaken. I then considered, and I still consider a combination of the commercial States to recover their rights, and restore the business of the country to its usual channels, as important and as legitimate, as the Union of the Colonies in 1774 to resist the oppressive measures of Great Britain.

The proceedings and result of the Convention are before the public. They were such as to do honor to the members of that patriotic body, and would do honor to the ablest council ever assembled in America. The treaty of peace which soon followed superceded further proceedings.

It will be observed that the first proposals for a convention proceeded from the *people in their primary assemblies.* Not one person in Boston had any concern in those proposals. That the members of the convention, or any of the persons who suggested the resort to a convention, had any views unfriendly to the Union of the States, is a gross calumny, originating in mere surmise and party jealousy. I heard all that was said at the meeting in Northampton, and at the meeting when the convention was proposed in Boston, and in the debates on the resolution in the House

of Representatives; and can affirm that the charges against the convention and those who proposed it, of designs against the constitution, are utterly false and groundless. The object of the people and the measures of the convention were, in my view, as *lawful*, as *constitutional*, and as *honorable*, as any that ever characterized the councils of any public body in this country. I knew *all* the gentlemen who first met to consult on the subject; I knew *most* of the members of the convention, and with many of them, I had been intimately acquainted for twenty or thirty years; I have been acquainted with many members of every Congress for more than fifty years, and I can affirm with confidence that no body of men, of the like number, ever convened in this country, have combined more talents, purer integrity, sounder patriotism and republican principles, or more firm attachment to the constitution of the United States, than the gentlemen who composed the Convention.

The history of this convention, Sir, presents full proof that party spirit may impose misrepresentations, upon a *whole people*, and mislead a great portion of them into *opinions directly contrary to facts*. Other instances may be mentioned, which have been equally injurious to the reputation of our best citizens, and even more pernicious to the public welfare. But let this example suffice.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of the high esteem and respect of

Your Obed' Servt

Endorsed: Letter to Daniel Webster Sept. 6. 1834

I sent this Letter to M^r^ Webster, without taking a copy —I afterward requested him to return it—which he did after taking a copy for himself.

In 1836 he compiled the Webster Genealogy[1] and wrote to his son on January 23rd:

[1] See Bibliography below.—[Ed.]

I send you copies of 'Genealogy' for private use. I wish all my children and grandchildren to keep a copy each. This is done for the purpose of preserving the history of the family, which I think every family should do, and to correct an error in Dr. Trumbull's History of Connecticut, who says, that 'John Webster lies buried in Hartford without a monument'[1] [W. MSS.].

After the publication of his revised version of the Bible Webster essayed no independent, original volumes, but his pen was incessantly employed in answering his critics, in arraigning the bookmakers who were borrowing his plumage to deck their naked ignorance, in noting scientific facts, and in contributions to the newspapers on the political situations of the moment.

During his last years he disclaimed any active interest in politics, yet his keen eye noted all the changes and lights and shadows of the political horizon. He remained an ardent Federalist to the last of his life—though refusing for many years to vote with any party, as none wholly represented his views—and his newspaper letters were frequent, and very strong in their expression of Federal opinions.

[1] 'Mr. William H. Whitmore in the first edition of his "American Genealogist" published in 1862, makes this the eleventh in order of time, of the early printed American genealogies. In the second edition, published in 1868, it appears as the twelfth, and in the third edition, published in 1875, as the eighteenth in order of time. As 1771 is given as the date of the earliest printed American genealogy, it will be seen that during the next sixty-five years but sixteen works of that character appeared.' Note in the edition of 1876, printed in Brooklyn, N.Y., by Paul Leicester Ford.

He wrote to the *National Intelligencer* under the signature of Rutledge, criticising President Jackson's administration, and referring to similar doctrines and usages in the time of Jefferson. The editors, Messrs. Gale and Seaton, declined the article, as they did 'not wish to strengthen Pres. Jackson by the precedents of Jefferson.'

He wrote frequently on various topics over his own signature. Two extracts are given below as specimens of the fire and the spirit of the indomitable old man of nearly eighty.[1]

His most important contribution, signed SIDNEY, was made in 1837 to his former paper, *The Commercial Advertiser*, then edited by Col. Stone. It was issued November 20th under the title *A Voice of Wisdom*, given it by the editor, and with this little introduction by him: 'If our readers knew who wrote the following most able and impressive article, they would be sure to give it heedful attention, without a hint from us; but as they do not, we must needs bestow upon them the advice, by no means to pass it over without a deliberate and reflecting perusal. They will find in it, perhaps, some positions advanced or intimated, with which sound republican principles cannot harmonize; and these they will reject as we do. But the general characteristic of the article is truth—serious and important truth—in the full and efficient conviction of which the welfare of our republic is most seriously involved. Age and wisdom have given us here a chapter of in-

[1] See Appendix XL. below.

valuable warning and advice—we cannot add the expression even of a faint belief that it will be read with profit.'

This article awoke much comment, and was greeted both with praise and with severe blame. Caleb Cushing of Massachusetts and others wrote to the editor for the article. It was extensively republished, and even outside the United States by the *Montreal Gazette*.[1]

To WILLIAM G. WEBSTER. W. MSS.

New Haven Nov^r 20. 1837

* * * With all the advantages which this country possesses, we must lament many deplorable evils. The sacrifice of human lives in steamers, & other vessels, & in rail-road cars & above all the murders & other outrages by mobs present a dark & melancholy picture. The late murder at Alton is

[1] The *Albany Argus* ascribed the article to Chancellor Kent; other papers indignantly denied such authorship. The *Albany Journal* criticises it under the title of 'Federalism revived,' and it aroused a storm of expression in the newspaper world. Webster's own copy, prepared for republication lies before me, with his direction: 'Omit' [the favorable introduction]—'Begin' [at the first paragraph of the article]. The compliment was little to him, and he suppressed it; his ideas were everything and he only desired to diffuse them. This was a full statement of his political beliefs.

A note in his own hand on SIDNEY is as follows: 'The article signed SIDNEY was written during the embarrassments which followed the removal of the public moneys from the Bank of the United States. It excited no small clamor in the State of New York and the clause respecting the chances of having as good a chief magistrate by *birth* as by *election* was denounced as favoring monarchy. This charge is unfounded. Nothing is said of monarchy. The purport of the clause was simply to state the chances of gaining a good chief magistrate, by the two modes specified, to be nearly equal, and nothing more. At the time when this was written, I had either not read, or I had

horrible. The abolitionists are infatuated, & their opposers are worse. I see no end to our disorders. Accept our love from your affectionate Father.

From WILLIAM CHAUNCEY FOWLER. W. MSS.

Midd[lebury] College Jan. 16, 1838.

* * * The children were very much pleased with their New Year's presents from their Grand-papa. I think they are doing pretty well. Emily succeeds very well in Virgil. She is now in her fifth book. She has got a letter in Latin prepared for you. I helped her to the phrase 'studiosorum rerum novovum,' and two or three other words. The main body of it she prepared, propria mente.

To WILLIAM G. WEBSTER. W. MSS.

New Haven April 8th 1838

* * * Mr Ellsworth is elected Governor, & the whigs have 20 out of 21 Senators & two thirds of the house of Representatives. We shall have a great parade in May, when the Governor enters New Haven. But after all our public affairs are very gloomy. Trade is almost at a stand—New York appears to [be] almost deserted.

We are justly punished for our violations of treaties with the Indians. *Ten millions* already expended in Florida, in driving a thousand Indians into the Swamps! And now a military force is to be employed to drive the Cherokees from their native soil, in consequence of a treaty with a part of the tribe, who had no authority to make it. Was there

wholly forgotten that Gen Schuyler had uttered a like opinion at Gen Washington's table more than forty years before. See the fact stated by Mr. Jefferson in his works. Vol. iv, p. 470.

'I believe every word of SIDNEY to be true; and farther that there is not in the English language, an article which contains more important political truth within the same compass.'

ever a gov[t] so conducted? Abolition too is taking a high tone in New England, & the anti-slavery society in Hartford, I am told, have demanded of the candidates for our Senate, a *pledge* that they will favor the cause. This is a degree of effrontery which was hardly to be expected in Connecticut. I look on our public affairs with alarm.

Your sister Julia is now in Washington.

My regards to Mr Ellsworth.

Affectionately Yours

To the same. W. MSS.

New Haven May 1. 1838

* * * We have a letter this day from Harriet, who speaks of herself despondingly. I hope she is not in a desperate condition, though very weak.

Tomorrow the Gov[r] elect will arrive, with Pinckney for his secretary. They will lodge at my house.

I have heard of Rosalie's safe arrival at Cincinnati, & of a great disaster there. I send you New Haven papers.

Love to you all, in haste

In the summer of 1838 Webster took his daughter Harriet on a driving trip for the benefit of her health.

From William Chauncey Fowler. W. MSS.

Midd. College

May 13. 1838

* * * A journey with you of a couple of weeks which you propose would I have no doubt be of service to her health, besides being very pleasant. We should as we always are be very much gratified to have a visit from you this summer, as soon as you can conveniently come. By the middle of

June, the time that you mention the roads generally are in pretty good order, & the weather pleasant.'[1]

To Ebenezer Smith Thomas. M.H.S.

New Haven, July 29, 1840.

Mr. Thomas,

I see in the sheets of your Reminiscences which you have been so good as to send for my perusal, that you have mentioned the electric effect which the oration of Mr. Hancock, March 5 1774, had upon the audience. This reminds me of an anecdote related to me by the late Judge Trumbull of this State.

In the year 1774, Mr. Trumbull was a student of law in the office of John Adams. Mr. Hancock was, at that time a wavering character; at least he was so considered by the leading whigs of that day. It was a matter of no small importance to bring him to a decision, as to the part he was to take in the crisis then approaching. To effect this object, the more stanch leading whigs contrived to procure Mr. Hancock to be appointed to deliver an oration on the anniversary of the Massacre; and some of them wrote his oration for him or a considerable part of it. This policy succeeded and Mr. Hancock became a firm supporter of the American cause. Judge Trumbull related to me these facts, as from his personal knowledge; & no person will question his veracity.

I have another anecdote, derived from the late Hon. Nathan Strong of Hartford, and coming to me through the Hon. Elizur Goodrich.

When the question of taking arms to resist the claims of Great Britain was to be decided in Connecticut, the legislature held a secret session, & debated a question the whole day. The result was in favor of resistance; & it is said the

[1] An account of this journey is given by my mother. See p. 372 below.—[Ed.]

most influential character in deciding the question was the Hon. Titus Hosmer, the father of the late Chief Justice Hosmer of Middletown.

I give you these anecdotes, as I have received them; & if you deem them of any value, they are at your service. I am, Sir, etc.[1]

From Harriet Webster Fowler.[2] W. MSS.

Amherst, Feb. 17th [endorsed 1841]

My dearest parents.

It seems a long time since we heard from you excepting through a newspaper and when we see Father's red pencil mark we infer that you are all well as usual. The lexicon is fairly completed, and now what can Father find to employ his thoughts about better than to write letters to his absent children and grand children. I propose that he should write them individually, a letter playful or grave, that they shall preserve most carefully this letter, and let it descend to future generations.

To Rebecca Greenleaf Webster. W. MSS.

Quincy July 10. 1842

Dear Becca.

I am now with your brother Daniel who is in good health & about as sociable & pleasant as ever, though

[1] From Mr. Norcross's collection. It was in Thomas's *Reminiscences of the Last Sixty-Five Years* (1840), ii. 169, but is of sufficiently curious interest to be included in this series of Webster letters. Thomas was a nephew of Isaiah Thomas, and seems to have possessed a share of the printer's love of personalities. In his book he states that 'the then celebrated Rev. Dr. Cooper' wrote the Hancock oration, and adds, 'but any man who ever heard Hancock address a public assembly, as I have, could not for a moment doubt his *ability* to write such an oration; the object was, to get him committed, beyond the hope of pardon, and that oration did it completely.'

[2] In the possession of the Editor.

bending under the weight of almost 80 years. He sends his love to you.

I yesterday called on your brother John, who is white with age. He was most glad to take me by the hand; he is in pretty good health, but his attack of palsy has somewhat affected his speech. Your Sister Lucy is bent almost double with age, but is in pretty good health. Mrs H. Dawes & her children are well.

I called also on Thomas Greenleaf & find him & his wife pretty well.

I spent two days in Boston, & dined with I. Lamb. The family is well & prosperous. Mr Eliot, minister of St. Louis, is with them.

I shall proceed to-morrow toward Concord in New Hampshire, & with all convenient dispatch shall make my way from that place homeward. I hope to reach Worcester on my way home in a week, & be at home in about a fortnight; perhaps a few days later.

Tell William, I received his letter of the 7th in Boston. My love to all the family.

Your affectionate Husband

With the revision of his *Dictionary* during these latter years, and published in 1841, in two octavo volumes, Webster at eighty years of age considered his life task accomplished, but his habits of literary occupation had become fixed and necessary, and after a few months he began to rewrite his *History of the United States for Schools*.[1] In 1843 he published *A Collection*

[1] "In a long conversation [in 1840] with Dr. Webster I found that his mind was strong, clear and active as ever; his conversation was full of that spirit and vivacity not often to be met with in one of his years. No man in the United States, and I may add Great Britain (for she too has adopted his Dictionary as the standard of our language) has done so much

of Papers on Political, Literary and Moral Subjects, selected from his various writings in early life. This was the last volume which he committed to the press, at the expiration of sixty years from the commencement of his literary labors in 1783.

In May Webster and his wife celebrated their golden wedding.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE FESTIVAL OF THE GOLDEN WEDDING.

By Eliza Webster Jones.

Bridgeport, May, 1842.

Shall I give you some account of our recent visit *home*, of the family meeting of which you may have heard some rumor? All the children, grand-children, and great grand-children of the dear, dear old Patriarch and his wife Rebecca were invited to gather at brother Goodrich's on Wednesday, the 4th of May. Through the favor of a kind Providence, we came together in health and comfort at the appointed time, and sent a troup of happy little ones to escort the head of our house to the gathering table. Brother's parlor was filled. 35 of us were there, and one only absent.[1] Sister G. took her seat by Father's chair on the carpet and I, mine on the other side. Pretty soon the six little boys came and seated themselves like Turks before him, and a little wee thing of 3 years left her picture books and came and squatted down so innocently at

for education as this great lexicographer, who I rejoice to find enjoys a green old age.' *Sketches of My Life and Times*, E. S. Thomas, ii. p. 65.

[1] Presumably Harriet Webster Fowler, through ill-health.—[Ed.]

the end of the row that all were greatly amuzed. There were only two present who could not sing, and all began in merry mood good 'Auld Lang Syne' and then 'Home, Sweet Home' and tears of tenderness and joy followed. We dined at ½ past one in the back parlor, the table being arranged on three sides of the room, and father and mother in the middle and the daughters on the one side, sons-in-law on the other and the grandchildren arranged in families, and my only brother, his wife and the great grand babies opposite the patriarch. Oh, it was a pleasant sight! When all were seated at the well filled board, brother G.[1] rose and fervently implored the blessing of heaven. We felt that God was with us and it was a cheerful meal. When we had finished brother Fowler made a few remarks expressive of our gratitude to God that we had been permitted to meet in such comfort, and that we were so united, loving and beloved, and returned solemn hearty thanks. Then we returned to the parlor to talk of old times and observe the happiness of the little folks whose eyes sparkled and whose smiles and laugh gladdened the hearts of us older folks who felt that we were to part never to meet all together again, till we stand unsheltered before the Great Author of our being to learn where shall be our last eternal home. 21 of us were professedly the children of grace, and the others—may they too come to the cross of Christ and find in Him their everlasting portion! At five we all went to Father's and took our tea in the home of our early days. In the evening before we parted, our beloved and revered parent called our attention, and kneeling, as we all did, fervently implored the blessing of heaven upon us, our children and our children's children to the latest generation. Oh shall not that prayer be heard? Then rising, he said, it was the happiest day of his life, to see us all together; so many walking in the truth and the others, children of promise. Oh, E. I cannot tell you half he said. Then he

[1] Professor Chauncey Allen Goodrich.

presented each of us with a Bible, his last gift,[1] with our names written by his own trembling hand; and we closed our meeting by singing 'Blest be the tie that binds.' Shall we ever forget it. Oh, no! the youngest there received some deep impression of the blessedness of nurturing a family in the fear of God. The little Bibles are cherished gifts.

June 3rd, Here, dear E. I was interrupted and left my sentence unfinished, but I believe I was going to tell you of little William Fowler who screemed out in his sleep that night—'My Bible, Oh Pa—take care of my Bible.'

In the summer of 1842 Webster had made his annual visits to his daughters in Hartford and Amherst, and at the latter place addressed the students of the college on the 4th of July.

In the spring of 1843 he revised an Appendix to his *Dictionary* prepared by his son.[2] Early in May 1843 he took a long walk (dressed in thinner clothing, which he had lightened for the season) to visit some old neighbors[3] in Water Street; he took a severe cold which ended in pleurisy. This terminated his life on the twenty-eighth of the month, in the eighty-fifth year of his age.

His funeral was largely attended. The students of Yale College and the children of the schools walked in the procession which was more than a mile in length. Dr. Taylor made the address. A modest granite shaft in the New Haven burying-ground marks his resting-place.[4]

[1] See Appendix XL below.

[2] *Yale Biographies*, F. B. Dexter.

[3] The Misses Brintnall

[4] For an account of Mrs. Webster's death, see Appendix XXXVIII below.

ACCOUNT BY ELIZA WEBSTER JONES. 'FOR MY LITTLE BOY.'

Six weeks since at this hour, I was sitting by the side of my honored father, aiding him while taking the last nourishment which was needed for his earthly and dying nature. His spirit strong in the promise of its Lord, was ready to spring from its decaying tabernacle, and mount up to a higher and holier service in his presence.

The summons was a gentle one—the tired frame yielded its immortal guest without a struggle. There was a perfect acquiescence in the divine appointment, but body and spirit shall meet again, perfected, glorified, and together in such holy union praise the love which conquered sin, death and the grave.

Oh, my father! I bless thee for thy counsels, for thy example of integrity and christian love, so childlike, humble and unwavering. I bless thee for thy prayers for me and mine, for thy unalterable love and sympathy, and Father in heaven, thee I bless from the very depths of my soul, that he was such a parent, and that he was spared to us so long!

On the Sabbath of the 21st of May, 1843, dear Father went to church all day, and in the evening passed an hour at Prof. Kingsley's (his opposite neighbor) in his usual health and cheerfulness. He remarked that his 'literary labors were all ended' and that during the remnant of his days 'the cultivation of his garden and the contemplation of the works of God would afford him sufficient employment and recreation.' Little did he think that the next Sabbath evening at the same hour, the wonderful creations of the eternal world, would be unfolding to his delighted vision, and give employment to his invigorated powers. On Monday, the day was unusually fine, and he walked twice to the

Post office, a distance of three quarters of a mile from his home. After the last walk in the afternoon he was very thirsty, and several times left the parlor for water, and it was so unusual, that the servants noticed it. (It was a remarkable characteristic of his that the little offices which age demands from the young, he always performed for himself. It was delightful to watch and anticipate his wants, but I do not recollect that he ever but once, asked me to do anything for him.) Pres. Day came in, and Father conversed with his usual interest for a little while, but soon felt the chill which was the precursor of his disease. When he was left alone he retired to his study, never to leave it until borne away in the narrow house of the dead. The chills followed and dear Mother and a physician were summoned speedily. The sickness was treated as pleurisy, altho' it seemed to be in its lightest form. The next day he was very sick, tho the effect of applications was favorable—he suffered little pain and no apprehension of danger was felt by his family. On Wed[a], I rode over to make my usual vacation visit, knowing nothing of dear father's indisposition. I found him lying on his study bed, not undrest, but in his wrapper. It was the *first time*, I had ever seen him in a reclining position. He gave me a warm kiss and smiling said 'I'm glad to see you daughter. It does me good to see my children. I've sent to Harriet to meet you here.' A pleasant conversation followed. He inquired particularly for my husband and children, and among many things, I told him that Emily had recently professed her faith in Christ. His eyes filled with tears. He said 'Another dear one added to the list. It gives me great pleasure to have them walking in the truth. There's nothing like this Eliza, to know that my descendants are striving to honor God—it is a great comfort in my declining years.' Then he asked after the prospects of the school,[1] and of my trees and shrubbery, and especially of the grape vines, that were slips from the parent tree on

[1] Mr. Henry Jones' school at Bridgeport.—[Ed.]

his father's farm, the fruit of which was a favorite one when he was a very little boy. He took me three years ago to the home of his childhood, which I had never visited before, and requested me then to cut some slips for my own garden, and cherish them in memory of him. The last summer the young plant produced only one grape in perfection, so I wrapt it in cotton wool and put it in a tiny box and sent it to him. He alluded to it in this conversation and said playfully, 'I held it up to mother, asked her if she did not want it, and popped it into my own mouth.'[1]

I visited the study three times before going to rest, and he was very affectionate and cheerful. He wished his drinks to be placed by his side, and no one to remain with him through the night. He was not willing Dear Mother's rest should be broken—she was so feeble. Sister Julia and myself wished to be near him, but he evidently preferred to be alone, and we had been early taught to regard with deference and delicacy his least desire.

On Thursday, he was not worse, he walked about his room and conversed with deep interest on many pleasant family topics. I worked by his side, and when he slept, I looked upon his dear unfurrowed face, and blest God that I had had a Christian father. Once he woke suddenly, and caught my eye fixed upon him. He smiled, and said

[1] From ELIZA WEBSTER JONES. W. MSS.

'Bridgeport Sept. 1842.

***'I went out yesterday to look at the grape vines which have grown large & strong—the little clusters blasted early in the season, but in *poking* about, I chanced to see *one nice fat grape*, which in *great glee* I brought in, & after exhibiting its fine qualities to eyes that longed & mouth that watered I carefully enclosed it in a *pill box well wiped* out & lined with cotton wool—so dear father pop it into your mouth, not as a pill—but *first* fruits of the youngest slip of the old patriarch vine of the homestead. I wish I could find one for mother but another year I think there will be many.'

sweetly 'you do look at your poor old father.' I had been careful not to seem to watch him. Frequently on that day, he spoke of his literary labors, of his essays, (the book just finished). 'I have done now,' he would say. Webster[1] came in; he inquired respecting his studies, and requested me to give him one of his spelling books. It was the last book he took in his hand and his last gift to his youngest grandchild. On Friday morning very early, he rose alone, and changed his linen. Mother at five, went into his room and he told her that he was weaker, and that the effort had exhausted him, and remarked soon that the soreness in his side was more concentrated, tho' he felt but little pain. New blisters were applied and vigorous measures used through the day. He expectorated freely tho' his breathing was more labored than before, yet he sat unsupported in his chair while being shaved, and suffered very little. We inquired of the physician, Dr Ives, if there was any danger in his case. He replied, 'If Dr Webster were not so old a man, I should have no apprehension: his age is against him.' We informed the absent children of his exact state on Friday afternoon. We felt that the disease would leave him feeble and we were not accustomed to see him sick and prostrate, and all our tenderness was excited. At night I urged dear Father to let me stay with him. He declined and playfully said, 'I am afraid you could not keep still.' I knew some one must be with him and Mother and sister J. joined with me. When the Dr came, he too urged it, and told Father that his symptoms were pleuritic, that this was the fifth night, and that medicines to aid expectoration were to be given every half hour, and of course he could not be alone. He smiled and yielded. It was a night of anxious watching. He became restless from the accumulation of phlegm and could not sleep more than 15 minutes, and required constant assistance. My heart was full, tho' I had strong hopes of his ultimate recovery. I had never seen

[1] Henry Webster Jones.

him suffer before, and a thousand thoughts chased through my mind that long sad night, of the desolation of the fatherless. To lose one so dearly loved, and so dearly loving you. But morning came in its brightness, father rested a little more quietly and awoke refreshed. He spoke pleasantly, and without apprehension of his sickness, and the physician found him better than he expected. Thro' the morning he was cheerful, conversing with mother and sister and myself as we alternately watched over him. After dinner, sister J. left and mother went below to rest, and I was alone with father. Soon he said, 'My daughter, will you retire for a little while?' I told him I would call Mother, and entreated him not to rise unaided, as he had done before. Mother was at the door in a moment. It was *locked*. We waited with great anxiety some moments. The perfect silence alarmed us, we feared father was faint and called to him. He had risen and walked across the room; but when he unfastened the door he was exhausted by his efforts. Mother went in and found him speechless. I followed and raised his head to administer a restorative. He faintly declined by a motion, but I placed it to his lips and he swallowed it. The physician and brother and sister Goodrich were in a few moments by his side. He told them he was not aware of his own feebleness before, and that he was afraid he had injured himself by his exertions. One chief characteristic was his delicacy and his fear of troubling others, and it remained to the last. I observed through this sad afternoon, an anxious expression on dear father's face. I caught his eyes fixed tenderly and inquiringly on me, as I moved about the room, and as mother went in and out, he followed her with an emotion which was very evident, tho' under strong control. He knew there was a change in himself. At 5 D[r] Taylor[1] called to see

[1] Rev. Dr. Nathaniel W. Taylor, an old friend and neighbor, Dwight Professor of Didactic Theology in Yale. His daughter was married to President Noah Porter, who later revised Webster's *Dictionary*.—[Ed.]

him. Father remarked 'I am very sick this afternoon, but I have no pain, and think I may recover.' Dr Taylor kindly answered 'You are an old man Dr Webster, and it is well to be prepared for the result whatever it may be.' Father looked expressively. He understood him and folding his hands, said 'I'm ready to go; my work is all done, I know in whom I have believed.' He then went on to speak of the past. 'I have struggled with many difficulties. Some I have been able to overcome, and by some I have been overcome. I have made many mistakes, but I love my country, and have labored for the youth of my country and I trust no precept of mine, has taught any dear youth to sin.' The interview was short for father was very weak. As soon as Dr T. left he called Sister Julia to him and said, 'My daughter, if the result of this sickness is death, you will be here to lay me out. I wish you to wrap me up as I am, and he took hold of his dressing gown and folded it across his breast.' When Sister could speak she said, 'Will you be explicit father? Your directions shall all be obeyed. Do you mean that you will be buried in that shirt and gown?' 'Yes, my child—I cannot bear the thought of exposure. Wrap me up as I am and draw my robe over all.' His manner was calm but we who had learned to read the language of his countenance, knew well his deep feeling at that time. He had said a little while before, 'I should like to live a few months longer for the sake of my family, but my essential work is all done.' He dearly loved the home circle. His affections were untouched by any taint which time in its passage is too apt to leave. Coldness, selfishness and distrust found no place in a heart which in every hour was seeking fellowship with God and staying itself on the broad and rich foundation of his grace. Tenderly he loved us, and deeply he felt the approaching separation from the dear companion of 50 years and the children who honored and blest him. Never shall I forget the look of subdued affection and deep sympathy which he

bent on us after he knew his danger. Once at 7. o'clock, Sat. evening, his expression was so full of meaning that I longed to catch his hand and bathe it with my tears, and tell him how I loved him, but I restrained myself. Twice he seemed about to speak to me, and I went to the farthest part of the room to conquer emotion, and when I looked up again, his hands were folded on his breast, and he was engaged in silent prayer. He often felt his pulse by placing his fingers on his temples, and on one occasion after doing so, his hands were clasped and his requests were evidently going up to God. Dear Mother and sister Julia staid with him on Sat. night. It was one of suffering. In the morning, very early I went into the room. He smiled and said, 'You are an early riser, daughter. Have you rested any?' I perceived that he was no better and turned to the window and raised the curtains. He asked 'if it would be a pleasant day?' 'I think not Father, the clouds look lowering.' 'I am sorry. I love the bright sunshine,' he answered. On the morning of this his last day on earth, when the sun breaking through the mist, threw its bright beams into his room, he looked up and smiled. His look seemed to say, 'I have my wish.' And he noticed the sweet singing of the birds upon the boughs of the elms which we had planted together 20 years before. Dear Father—as the sun went down on this eventful Sabbath, the unclouded, unsetting sun of heaven shed its glory upon your emancipated spirit and the songs of tens of thousands of redeemed ones broke upon your enraptured ear. Father knew that expresses had been forwarded to his absent children and on Sabbath morning said to dear mother, 'There will be a gathering to-day. Are you provided for so many. Have you a sufficient dinner.' When satisfied that arrangements had been made for the comfort of all, he remarked that the light nourishment he took did not strengthen him, and asked for some chicken. With the consent of the physician some was brought to him. He sat in his bed supported by

pillows and fed himself as I held the server before him and raised his cup to his lips without assistance and this he did till the last hour of life. Brother and Sister Ellsworth came at 9. oclock. I was not present when they first met father, but sometime after, on entering the room, he was asking brother, respecting a recent act of the legislature, and all were faintly smiling through their tears at the strong interest of the dying patriot in his country's welfare. He asked me 'if I was going to church'—'No, we shall all stay with you to-day.' 'Must you go to B.[1] to-morrow?' 'I shall never leave you sick father—it is not necessary for me to go.' 'I am glad,' he replied, 'stay if you can. I love to have all about me.' It was evident that Father expected to die, that this was his last sickness, but from many things, it was certain in the morning he did not expect it so soon. I asked if he had any message for Harriet and William. He simply answered, 'I think I shall see them.' Brother did arrive at 2 o'clock and the meeting between the dying man and his only son was deeply affecting. Father could then converse with ease and had a long conversation with him on business. He requested in the morning that prayers might be offered in church for him. His own dear pastor was most unfortunately absent, but Dr Stuart, his pastor of former years and his spiritual father, was present, and he knew how to approach the throne of grace in his behalf, and after the services were over he came to the sick chamber. 'Are you then going, Sir?' was his greeting as he took his hand. 'Yes,' was the reply. 'I have lived to a good old age, and goodness and mercy have followed me to the end. I suffer but little.' 'Well, I trust in this hour, you can rejoice in the Lord.' 'I am entirely submissive to the will of heaven,' was the quiet answer. 'But you are more than submissive, Dr Webster, You can go rejoicing in the Lord, can you not?' 'I have confidence in God. I know in whom I have trusted. I am wholly

[1] Bridgeport.

submissive,' meekly said the dying man. It was *characteristic.* It would not have been like him to express joy or elation, in view of a change, the solemnity of which he so deeply realised. His faith, in the truth of revelation was strong and fixed, his mind clear and undisturbed, his heart rested on the promise of the Redeemer, 'I am with you to the end,' and was in peace. He seemed as the sheltered lake, when neither storm beats upon its surface, nor breeze ruffles its surface or the sunbeams. Affection poured its stream into its waters and deepened their current as they were borne heavenward beneath the sweet influence of the Sun of Righteousness, and is it strange they lingered? A tender wife and loving children were clinging round our father. He knew our grief and felt himself the separation deeply. In the afternoon his respiration became more difficult, he changed his position often for relief, but could still converse freely with us. All his children surrounded him but one, and looking with deep affection on the grieving group, he said, 'you have all been good children to me. It is pleasant to be sick with so little pain, and such kind nurses. I have much to be grateful for.' One dear sister threw herself on his pillow, and said with much emotion, 'Father if we have ever grieved or troubled you, forgive us now.' With a sweet and almost playful smile, just as he would have spoken when in health, he answered, 'Do you think my children, that I have laid up anything against you?'

Some time after, I asked him if he suffered much. 'Not acute suffering dear, but an indescribable uneasiness.' 'Well dear Father, you will soon be at rest and in glory, with sister Mary and the little grandchildren who have gone before you.' 'Yes my child, I trust so.' 'And Father all the rest will follow on to heaven, we hope.' He raised his eyes filled with tears, folded his hands purple with the efforts of expiring nature, and answered with strong feeling, 'Yes, they all will, if prayers can save them.' The last

words faltered on his lips. Oh the rich legacy of his humble prayers! Three times every day for forty years he had commended each of us by name to the mercy of his covenant-keeping father, and he lived to see most of his descendants, all who were old enough, professedly of the flock of Christ—the good Shepherd, and oh may the rest to the latest generation be gathered in.

When his expectoration became more difficult, brother G. offered a short fervent prayer by his bedside, and again his hands were folded in devotion, and his countenance expressed a sense of God's presence. About this time his sight seemed to fail. He waved his handkerchief before him and asked if sister Louisa were present. Twilight approached but no lights were brought. The aspect of death was softened by departing day. Father took his drinks when offered, but said but little, the last two hours of life. When asked if his lips should be wet, he gently motioned *no*. I placed my hand in his, he gently pressed it, and ten minutes before eight, he gave a sigh and all was over. The messengers of God were there and the aged pilgrim's spirit was carried to its rest in heaven. Oh who would not be a Christian—who would not die the death of the righteous! An arch of glory rests over the grave of believers. Its key stone is the throne of the eternal. On it is written 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying—for the former things are passed away.' True and faithful is the promise and at the resurrection, it shall stretch around, above and below, encircle and bear them up in robes of beauty to the Lamb. He shall feed them and lead them to living fountains of waters

SOME SCATTERED REMINISCENCES OF MY GRANDFATHER AND GRANDMOTHER WEBSTER.

By Emily Ellsworth Fowler Ford.

These reminiscences are those of childhood, but they may help to portray the private and family life of this domestic man.

I cannot tell at what age I began to remember my grandparents, but my grandfather always visited his daughters once each year. I have been told that he once took me the long journey from Middlebury, Vermont, where my Father resided for some years as Professor of Chemistry in Middlebury College, to New Haven, or from New Haven to Middlebury, by the slow stage route of those days, when one had to arise at two three or four o'clock A.M., and drive heavily over the long hills of the Green Mountains for twelve or fifteen hours on the stretch. Probably my Father or Mother were with me, but at Poultney or Walpole, Vermont, or some small village, when the mail bag was flung off the stage, a large dog who was evidently waiting for it, seized it in his mouth and dragged it off to the Post Office, carrying his head very high, and walking very slowly with stately steps and a great sense of his important station of trust and responsibility. I, aged perhaps three or four years, was said to have burst out in a long delicious fit of childish laughter which communicated itself to my elders, especially to my grandfather who laughed low and long at me, and who has narrated the incident in some one of his writings for children. Now I have a distinct impression of this scene, and can still bring before my eyes, the huge shaggy bulk of the government messenger, his proud walk, and can even hear the clink of the mail bag as it was dragged along the ground, and yet I am by no means sure that these are not pictures constructed by my imagination from the details which others have given me. But I distinctly remember a visit made by

my grandfather to Middlebury, when he brought my Aunt, Mrs. Jones, his youngest daughter with him, with her second daughter Emily, who had been very ill with some severe digestive disorder, which left her peevish and ailing. I think he took my mother a carriage journey at this time and that the party traveled some weeks together. The next year my Grandfather took my mother and myself to the 'White Hills' of New Hampshire in the same private carriage, and with the same driver, an arrangement which filled me with awe over its splendor. Of this journey taken when I was about seven years old I have many vivid remembrances. As a child I had the same love of flowers and nature that still gladdens my life in middle age, and the lonely mountain roads were lined with wild blossoms. Often my Grandfather would stop the carriage and allow me to pick my lapful of violets, trilliums, liverworts, and anemones. Once after he had stopped for me many times and I felt that I had had indulgence enough and did not mean to say one word as I passed the beautiful carpet of blossoms all along the roadside, a wonderful bit made me exclaim with delight, when he said: 'Get out child, if you want them, and don't scream at them.' I stopped abashed, and told him I did not want to stop the carriage any more, and I suppose seemed frightened at his sharpness, when he put his hand on my head, and said: 'Never mind dear.' I remember well the solemn pine woods, the long hills, the little taverns with their perpetually recurring meals of veal cutlets, where my Grandfather was much amused at my relishing the strips of broiled salt pork that garnished the platters of this rather tasteless meat, which he would never eat even as a farmer boy, having a delicate taste and being always a light feeder. I recall my poor mother's severe paroxysms of coughing, which were the cause of the journey. This cough was the result of a severe attack of whooping cough through which she had passed in sympathy with her children, and at that time it was not thought alarming, but it never left her for nine years and doubtless

prepared her to yield to a sudden attack of lung fever which ended her life. I remember my own attack of summer complaint, and my lying on a warm fluffy feather bed, and the country landlady bringing me a cup of hot senna tea. When I drank it without complaining, the landlady expressed surprise and Grandfather who stood by me said: 'She has been brought up to do as she is told.' I remember the long low inn in the White Hills kept by Crawford and the wood strawberries at Fabian's where I sat on the narrow piazza in the midsummer twilight, and saw the fishers come in with their day's sport, while I tried to draw the outline of the hills opposite. I remember the bustle at starting in the morning, when the comfortable carriage and fine horses with Howard, the driver, would appear before the door of the night's stopping place, and my aged grandfather (he was about seventy-eight) would enter with his swift, light step, and receive my invalid mother who slowly followed him, and would settle her in her place, I jumping in after. I cannot follow the route we took, though with the frank gluttony of childhood, I remember eating broiled salmon for tea at Nashua, and pickerel somewhere else on the road, and my grandfather telling me what a fierce cannibal it was among fishes. I wonder now that he was willing to charge himself with the care of an invalid child like my cousin, or a creature with quicksilver in her veins like myself. But his patience and indulgence to my restlessness and activity I recall with gratitude and amazement, a patience and indulgence which I rewarded with fond sympathy and proud admiration in later years. In ordinary moods he was a grave, gentle, highbred man, kindly to all and especially tender to his brood of grandchildren, and to me always considerate and even caressing. I have never lived with any person who entered so entirely into my wishes and necessities, and his care and love for his descendants, especially for his son, who was never fortunate in business, was unceasing. I had no ear of him; only love.

When I was twelve years old I spent a winter in his family at New Haven, and attended school at Miss Dutton's—Grove Hall. Then I was better able to understand the excellence of my Grandfather's character. At this time he was about 80 years old, tall, erect, and slender, but not thin in figure or face. As a young man he had brown eyes, sometimes called gray, and abundant hair, well cared for, of an auburn tint, and the fair ruddy skin that accompanies the reddish hair. This combination seemed to give him the fire and enthusiasm of the sanguine temperaments with the stability and perseverance of the bilious races.

From an article on Noah Webster in the Mother's Magazine by Mrs. Whitlesey, one of the Goodrich family which was knit to him by friendship for years, and later by marriage, I take this description,

'As we were walking across that beautiful lawn in front of good old Yale we could not but recognize Dr. Webster in the tall, slender, remarkably erect figure with light elastic step approaching us. Though then at the advanced age of eighty years, his hair was but slightly "silvered o'er with age." In alluding to his healthy appearance and his activity, it was but natural to inquire if in his estimation, his remarkable health, his mental vigor, and his longevity, could be traced to any assignable causes, and if so what were they. "Certainly," was his quick response; and with his usual kind and affable disposition, he added, "In the first place, Madam, I always accustomed myself to retire at an early hour, and to make it a point to lay aside my cares with my clothes. In the second place, though I have had but a feeble constitution I have made it an invariable rule to rise with the lark. In the third place, I have, even to my present advanced age, uniformly combined mental labor with considerable bodily exercise, without remitting it even for a day. And in the fourth and last place, I have studiously endeavored to keep a conscience void of offense toward God and man."'

My memory attests the faithfulness of Mrs. Whitlesey's

description of his personal appearance. He rose early and shaved before any of the family were up in the sitting room, where the glass between the windows gave him an excellent light. In this room, at one side of the fire by a small bookcase, was his large armchair, my grandmother's sewing chair by the window and her work table at the other side. Over the sideboard hung a medalion portrait of General Washington in blue clay, and a small portrait of my Aunt Emily opposite; over the looking glass there was a cabinet portrait of one of Mr. James Greenleaf's sons, beautiful as a cherub. Grandfather was always carefully and handsomely dressed; though *I* do not remember him in short clothes, (with black silk stockings showing a handsome leg) which he and Hon. Elizur Goodrich and Judge Daggett wore long after their cotemporaries had laid them aside; but his straight, slender form, with shapely hand and foot (nicely shod,) and massive head with flowing locks of white and steel colored hair without a sign of baldness—at eighty-five years of age—rises before me as I write. Judge Daggett with his velvet breeches, gold spectacles and prominent features whom I often met crossing the green, was too much wondered at by my childish eyes to be forgotten. I was always a little frightened and wished to run away when I saw him coming, for his deep, formal bow seemed to impose obligations on my behavior that I shrank from assuming. The idea of those days was: 'If you wish children to be polite treat them politely yourself, as if they were ladies and gentlemen already,' and this training and etiquette were exactly carried out. I remember the solemn feeling I had when some of the *grandes dames* like Mrs. Salisbury, mother of Professor Salisbury, and Mrs. Woolsey, wife of the President of Yale, came to visit my grandmother. There was a stately curtsey made by the tall visitor as she entered the door, which was met by one from my tiny but very straight and graceful grandmother as she arose from her chair; each advanced a step and dropped

another curtsy; when they met a second after in the center of the room, another was executed as they greeted each other, and then the visitor was seated and welcomed with all possible honor. I, meantime, shrinking with dread as I watched them, for I knew that I next should be called upon to 'make my manners'—unable to steal out of the room, felt as if I were in the presence of two queens. But in ordinary moods my grandmother was full of frolic, and there was a great deal of innocent merriment in the family. This formal manner was put on like her brocades as a robe for suitable occasions when both became her well; but they were both easily slipt off for the plainer dress that was the household wear of matrons and maidens in those days.

Grandfather was a temperate and dainty feeder, and my grandmother seemed to live upon air. The neighbor daughter, Mrs. Goodrich, whose love and care for her aged parents was unceasing, often brought in some *bonne bouche* to tempt her palate; but she used to say, 'two custards last mother for three days!' Grandfather held to simple diet; at breakfast a cup of coffee, a slight relish and a slice of toast, of which the crusts were my share—a taste I still retain. He spent the morning hours in his study, and took his walk in the afternoon. He slept upon a small narrow bed in his study, a room which it delighted us children to visit, for grandfather always had a box of raisins, or a small paper of peppermints which he kept for his own mouth which was often dry, and which he liberally dispensed to us. At dinner, a slice of meat with vegetables, fruit and a glass of wine (madeira) sufficed him and a 'dish of tea' with a bit of bread and butter and some sweetmeats made his supper. He had decidedly a sweet tooth derived from our Saxon ancestors, for in their earliest banquets they mingled their jellies and their venizen, and put raisins and figs into their game pies; and he liked preserves and jams which the good Lucy Griffin, who lived with him for many years used to prepare in the nicest way.

At this time I remember my grandfather taking me up to the clean spacious attic and showing me the yellow fall pippins on the floor, and the chestnuts spread out to dry and telling me to eat my fill.

I also remember his sitting down with me in the study and explaining his philological views and fighting over his battles with his adversaries and he found in me a willing and sympathetic listener, if not a wise one. In many ways he made me his companion. My music was also a source of pleasure to him. Often when I began to practice on the piano he would come down from the room above which was his study and walk up and down the floor as I played. When I sang airs which he knew, such as 'Scots wha hae with Wallace bled' and 'Auld Lang Syne,' he would strike in with a very true, sweet, quavering voice; and this love for music never failed him.

This musical taste was transmitted to his family. Emily and Harriet sang and played well—for those days—on the piano. William had a fine tenor voice and was an excellent flutist. Indeed his musical taste was often a snare to him in earlier life, diverting his mind from larger and more manly pursuits. Mary and Julia sang 'like an angel,' and long after the latter's hair was white her silvery, resonant singing would charm us restless little ones of a Sunday evening.

But though Grandfather came to see his children once a year, and expected all of them to return the visit, though he wrote constantly and kindly to them—caring for their best estate of mind and body—many of the younger grandchildren were timid before him. He often became very animated in discussing principles, or past history, but his common mood was grave, reticent, though kindly, and his refinement of nature and innate modesty were feminine.

It was a personal aversion to the occasional coarse phrasing of the Bible which largely influenced him to retranslate it, for with his high and pure ideal of moral life, this source of it was at war; he thought that the expressions

of the earlier translators did not do justice to the spirit of holiness inculcated. Free conversation and jokes with *sous-entendres* were very obnoxious to him, and if one was made in his presence, he rose and left the room; if the offender were one of his own family, the rebuke was sharp and instantaneous.

Probably in early life his temper was quick, but it very rarely showed itself in domestic intercourse. When he was angry, it was against sin, and not as a personal offence against himself. Once when something coarse or impertinent was said in his presence he rebuked the culprit so severely that one of his little girls, who sat by said: 'Papa makes me siver (shiver) like a top.' In my many months of residence with him I never saw him roused to anger but once, and that was when a dubious and rather indelicate word was mentioned before him.[1]

Indeed it must have been a rash nature that could approach this noble old gentleman with anything but reverence. His face indicated his power as well as his benevolence, his apparel was spotless as a Quaker's, and his manners were as highbred as his dress. Yet his speech was straight-forward and strong rather than elegant, he spoke to the point without circumlocution and without detail, so that his refinement seemed to be of temperament, while his intellect was robust rather than graceful.

I have the impression that at one time in his life he was a snuff taker,[2] and that he gave it up on losing his snuff box when he was about fifty years old. I do not remember this habit, and I think if he had used snuff in my childhood, I should retain some recollection of it since I was an observant child with a good memory, and was a great deal with him.

[1] Upon a broadside in attempted verse, entitled *The Bunter's Wedding*, is written: 'Too low for the sublimity of my genius and the elegant taste of N. Webster.' [L. C.]

The hand shows him to have been still young—probably during his southern tour.—[Ed.]

[2] See p. 140, *ante*.

When I had finished school and was packing to return to Amherst I found my trunk too small for me. I told him my trouble. He said nothing, but walked down town. In an hour or two a small hair trunk arrived which he had bought for me. Before that, my grandmother who was neatness and order itself, had complained that I, who was a careless child, left my thimble and scissors lying about. The next day Grandfather bought me a pretty rosewood work box and said: 'Now little Emily has a place to put up her things.' I remember his helping me into the stage under the care of Miss Susan Taylor, and Mr. Eli Whitney, with my little basket of lunch, and his seeing my baggage adjusted for me. All these are trifles, but they illustrate his loving, patient nature, which neglected no duty or kindness. He wrote to me often and I have a Latin letter in return for some school girl Latin of my own.[1] He had arranged to have me spend my seventeenth year with him—after my mother's death—which plan was carried out, but he was gone, and my dear sweet grandmother left alone.

In the summer of 1842 he made his last visit to Amherst and addressed the students on the 4th of July. I never saw him again; but my appreciation of him has grown with my growth and strengthened with my strength. I remember the simplicity of his tastes, the fidelity of his convictions, the unwearied devotion of his days to noble ends, and the faithful loving nature and the honorable career of patient scholarship and patriotic service, which embodied so much for the American nation.

Of my lovely grandmother I have much to remember. Her stateliness, her daintiness, her joyousness were a delight to us all, and her loving patience never failed even with a turbulent careless child like myself. Once I jumped into a kettle of hot water which stood on the hearth in the kitchen and scalded my foot badly. Of her first tenderness in taking off the shoe and stocking where the skin went with them;

See p. 316, *ante*.

of her gentle wrapping with oil and lime water; of my Aunt Goodrich coming in prepared to watch me for the night, and carrying me to grandmother's bed room; of how they took turns in telling me stories to withdraw my thoughts from the pain, it would be difficult to speak, but I remember them all. That first night was beguiled with tales from Madame de Genlis, and the funny bright way of their recitation still lives in my mind.

For a practical housekeeper, whose eyes were everywhere, and whose skilful touch and mind governed the perfectly organized household, Grandmother was a great novel reader, and she cultivated her imagination even in extreme old age. She was deft with her needle and the patchwork quilts of the day amused her ingenuity.

Her last two years were spent upon her bed in a partly paralyzed condition, a fall from a high step ladder where she stood to arrange some curtains produced this condition. This last activity was for hospitality, as she was preparing to receive guests while the American Board of Foreign Missions met at New Haven. These months of passivity only displayed the patience and sweetness of her character, and her playfulness never deserted her.

MY MOTHER.

By Eliza Webster Jones.

The earliest recollection of my Mother was at the time of my baby brother Henry Bradford. I must have been a little more than two and a half years old & Henry lived only a few weeks. I had slept with my sisters Emily & Julia & in the early morning a servant came to tell them that baby was dead. They dressed quickly & went below leaving me to care for myself. I went down to the bedroom door & my mother opened it for me & snatched me to her heart & said, 'You are my only baby now.' She sat down & wept a little with me in her lap & then took me to

the easy chair, which is now in my possession & showed me my tiny brother in his white robes. Mother was very lovely in her face & 'fairy-like in form' in her early years. Her eyes were a soft hazel, her complexion a clear brunette. The whole expression of her face was ever that of sweetness & kindness. She was full of life, cheerful & hopeful in her temperament, & ready for frolic with her little ones. I remember how I liked to sit on a 'cricket' at her feet & listen to her stories of which there was an unfailing store, & she told them over & over with enjoyment herself, if she found we little folks were entertained. Dear unselfish Mother—she never seemed wearied by her cares for us. She was always patient & self controlled. I do not remember hearing ever from her lips one fretful word. I never saw her angry though sometimes pained & grieved at our wrong doing. She was early a Christian, but her spiritual life was greatly quickened at the period of the great revival when Mr. Stuart was the pastor of the church where she worshipped. I was a very young child then & so from the earliest I had the great advantage of her religious teachings. She liked poetry & hymns & encouraged me to learn them myself & to repeat them often. 'Hymns for Infant Minds' were my delight, & as I learned to read at a very early age I learned them all, & some of them I used to think over when sent early to bed & their influence I feel even now. 'I thank the goodness & the grace, which on my birth hath smiled' made me hate slavery from my infant years—& one of my first voluntary prayers was that God would make all free, & most earnest was I. The prayers of all my childhood years are answered, & I praise God for it. Soon the bond of Union & Christian love will be drawn closely about the Races. All shall be one in Christ Jesus.

I remember my mother when her sweet face was shaded by solicitude by the infirmities of my youngest sister, Louisa born two years after Henry Bradford's death. Her care for her was incessant & I was given up to the attentions of my

sister Julia who became as it were a second mother to me & was always loved as such. Sister Julia was like mother in her gentleness & sprightliness & unselfishness. Father once said to me 'Mother is never so happy as when I send home a piece of muslin or flannel & set her to work for others.' She had a great share of executive ability & could plan & execute with remarkable speed anything she undertook for her household. When tired she would slip away & with some book of Romance or poetry soon be rested for work again. I remember with amusement her liking for the lighter literature of the day, at the same time of her life, when the works of Hannah Moore, John Newton & others of a very devout character were equally her resource. One of her favorite books became a delight of mine, Mrs. Rowe's *Letters from the Dead to the Living*,[1] & oh how they fed my imagination. I was a delicate child & was sent early to rest at night & used to compensate myself by flights into the spirit world & hold long talks with the angels & with the Scripture characters I liked best; Abraham, Elijah & Daniel & the Disciple whom Jesus loved were often met on the Heavenly Hills, & I asked questions, & made the answers according to the knowledge I had. On the Sabbath I remember how Mother used to take my brother William & a young servant of my age she was 'bringing up' as a waitress[2] into the large upper kitchen with myself and hear our lessons in the Assembly Catechism, & the hymns we learned each week. We recited the whole catechism in three sabbaths & then began again, & I understood it very early but did not approve of all the answers. The expression 'sinned in him & fell with him' in 'his first transgression' I marked off with scratches of my pencil, & 'I didn't' was the language of my heart—

[1] 'Friendship in Death,' in *Letters from the Dead to the Living* by Elizabeth (Singer) Rowe.—[Ed.]

[2] Probably Adeline or Ellen, mentioned in the letters.—[Ed.]

[Here the copy of Mrs. Jones' reminiscences breaks off, and recommences below.—Ed.]

There were fifteen children of the good Sheriff William Greenleaf & dear Mother was the thirteenth. My Father said he had never seen so large a family so perfectly united in love, so amiable in their several relations to each other. I was beginning to feel like a young lady at this time of his allusions to my Mother's family. We were riding through Braintree on our way from Boston & he concluded the conversation with this remark 'When you marry Eliza look out for the stock.' So I have never forgotten it. It was an unusual thing for him to make such a remark. I never knew my Mother argue a point with my Father. She would express an opinion & defer to him as the best judge of matters, out of her sphere as Mother & housekeeper—but she found in him a consideration which few wives receive from their husbands. My Father was observant, reticent & not often demonstrative in his affections. We as small children did not understand him & were timid in his presence. As we matured we knew the deep affection of his nature, the strong under-current which welled up occasionally surprising us & then was quickly controlled. Not one of his children had his reticence. We were more like Mother, free & outspoken at home & in society. The 'Greenleaf' was in the midst of buds & blossom. Father was like the tulip tree before me now, on the lawn, straight & stately, its blossoms high above our reach. We look up wistfully & would catch the delicate petals—now & then some breeze will waft one to us, not often. I have seen my Father's eyes fill with tears, when he would be silent. I used to wish he would speak & free a full heart from its oppression. He seldom did—when he did it was memorable. So Father & Mother were very unlike but the years of their life glided harmoniously. My Mother dearly loved the Bible and read it a great deal. When she was very young a brother became blind from an accident. He was

near my mother in age & I have understood was almost ready to enter College at Harvard. Mother read aloud to him a great deal & from the Word of God. In this way she became familiar with it & committed chapter after chapter to memory. She could repeat many of the epistles entire & much of the gospels, forty of the Psalms & many of the grand chapters of Isaiah. In her long last illness of ten months this was a sweet resource. If we mentioned the text on coming from church she knew where to find it always. Dear Mother, I fear that some of her children are not as familiar with the scriptures. There are too many religious papers now, or so called religious. Once we had few books & read them thoroughly.

CHAPTER XVII

CHARACTER AND ACHIEVEMENT

In concluding this memoir an estimate of Webster's character seems naturally to complete the record.

Perhaps the most marked mental trait throughout all his active years was his love for, and his faculty of, investigation. The facts and principles of history, the facts and principles of science, the facts and principles of language absorbed his thoughts from the earliest moment of his college years to the end of his long and busy life. He was a born investigator.[1]

[1] Dr. Francis A. March, the Anglo-Saxon scholar, has summed up the characteristics of Webster's researches in these words :

'But Noah Webster had a genius for linguistic investigations which has not been surpassed by any English lexicographer or grammarian. The dictionaries before his time were in the first stage of philology, unorganized accumulations of facts. Webster caught the spirit which was beginning to move in France and Germany, and advanced from Horne Tooke to the second stage. He grasped the general principles of etymology ; that certain root-sounds have a definite sense which is the radical sense of all words into which they enter ; that the growth of words goes on according to regular laws both of sense and sound ; that the various meanings of a word should be developed from the radical meaning according to regular laws of philological suggestion ; that all languages have like roots and laws, so that a comparison of all should be made to throw light on all, and on language in general ; that letters of the same organ interchange so that the recognizing of kindred words is no guess-work. Noah Webster's life was nobly spent in reörganizing English

Another characteristic of his mental organization was his prescience. He seemed to anticipate the needs and the discoveries of the future, and this prophetic ken was the more remarkable as his intelligence was of the practical rather than imaginative order. But as a young political writer, before he became acquainted with the great statesmen, all his writings look toward the future, as well as advise for the present moment. In proposing a new system of government which should act 'not on the *States*, but directly on individuals, and vest in Congress

lexicography in view of these principles. * * * And he kept in mind the wants of the American people. The merits and defects of his great work are accordingly characteristic of America.

'His independence is so—running sometimes into love of innovation; any Englishman of that day would have simply amended and enlarged Johnson and Walker. This is, on the whole, a great merit. We have already said that it advanced the philological stand-point a whole stadium. It has also aided greatly in the improvement of the language. * * *

'Webster's Dictionary, then, is suited to the uses of the American people, and well deserves the popularity it has attained. It is in its definitions, however, that its greatest worth is found. His attempt to deduce all of the meanings of each word from one fundamental idea according to uniform laws of suggestion, naturally led him to describe the ideas to be defined, and not to be content with synonyms, and also led him to anticipate the changes of meaning in individual words, and to be prepared with distinctions carefully elaborated. His success has been universally acknowledged both in this country and abroad. * * *

'We have already said that the progress of modern philology has left Webster far behind. * * *

'The merit of Webster's definitions is such, that, until another philological genius shall appear, with so superior a method that it will be right for him to work into his own book the particular statements of Webster, we cannot hope to have a popular dictionary which shall equal Webster as a whole.' * * * See *English Lexicography;* THE AMERICAN THEOLOGICAL REVIEW, 1860, ii. pp. 446, 448 and 449.

full power to carry its laws into effect,' he wrote from his own insight. In his efforts for a copyright law, in his editing of Winthrop's journal, in his educational and scientific studies, in his anti-slavery convictions, in his premiums and prizes for scholarship, in his medical researches, and in his investigations into language, he was always the pioneer, ahead of his age, a leader among his contemporaries. In philology he began in 1783, and the oldest claim of comparative philology in Europe dates from the formation of the Oriental Society in 1784, so that he was the pioneer in Europe as well as in America in independent research.

It has been said that in every discovery given to the world the observer of nature comes first who accumulates facts and records them. Sometimes the same mind goes behind the facts, recognizes the principles, and formulates the laws which produce the facts, and under which they may be classified; and later appears the mind which adapts the facts of the new science for the use of mankind. Franklin with his key and his kite was the predecessor of Morse and Edison.

Webster stepped a little way in each of the pathways of research, later or simultaneously followed by careful and accurate specialists. He announced, if he did not discover, that verbs always mean motion and force, that the root meaning governs their derivations, that the particles of ancient and modern languages are used as prefixes to nouns or verbs, that there

are regular laws for the growth and decay of words, that comparison of languages throws light on all, that consonants are interchangeable in different languages, the soft sounds of the southern tongues growing harder in the northern dialects, and the same word changing to softer sounds when passing into milder climates. And all these discoveries were not kept in rare volumes for the use of scientists, but published abroad in cheap school-books and dictionaries for the education of the young. He made mistakes; he sometimes was misled by fancies, analogies, or resemblances (as the great Bopp, the founder in Germany of comparative philology has sometimes been); he was sometimes inconsistent with himself, but he was always investigating and ready to retract anything he considered erroneous. His simplification of spelling has very generally been adopted in England and America, nor do we see why this dropping out of unnecessary letters, which represent neither sense nor sound, should not go on without limitation, so that our great-grandchildren may look with astonishment on our spelling as we look on that of the times of Elizabeth and James the First—when Sir Walter Raleigh, one of the most correct and elegant writers, wrote *conveigh* (convey), *hee*, *wee*, *somme*—and congratulate ourselves when we compare Clarendon's *History*, whose improvements in spelling for his time were very great. We do not say with Clarendon *perswaded*, *suddain*, *frolicque*, nor *alarum*, yet he

anticipated *error* without *u* and reduced *publicke* to *publick*.

It is plain from his philological career that Webster possessed industry, perseverance and persistence in an extraordinary degree. The names of these qualities change according to the success of the individual who displays them. What is called self-conceit in an adventurer struggling in new fields becomes in the successful hero the prophetic instinct of the discoverer; the obstinacy of the inventor is rechristened and called the firmness of conviction of the successful patentee.

This charge of self-conceit and presumption meets all souls that strive for reform, and it was often hurled at Webster through the middle period of his life. His own generation, and the older generation of patriots and scholars before him, believed in him from their personal knowledge of the man and his great qualities. They trusted him, for he had worked with them for high ends. But the later generations (for he lived through nearly three) who heard of him—not as the active scholar in politics, nor the practical man of affairs—considered him a self-admiring visionary. Manufactures and railroads were visible facts of progress; the education he strove to give the people was an invisible, silent force, making no show by the side of the material civilization of the day. It was the fashion to jeer at him, as it was the earlier fashion to ridicule Franklin, with whom he had many traits in common.

Whether as writer, editor or philologist, his love for his country nerved his arm and inspired his pen. He had the highest aims for her, political, social, educational, moral, and his practical mind laid hold of the idea that the young must be taught aright, or the country would not fulfil its destiny. His upright soul, downright manner, and determined statement, without the arts of the diplomatist or the compromises of the politician, often awoke censure and opposition, but the sincerity, ardor and self-sacrifice of his devotion were never doubted, and they have left great and abiding results.

His private life shows the same perception of duty that governed his mental nature. His moral life corresponded with his mental, and truth, purity, dignity and devotion made up his constitution. His industry was only equalled by his generosity. As a husband, a father, a friend and a citizen he lived in the high discharge of duty and affection, and his enormous activities were all consecrated to right ends. He seemed sometimes to be almost devoid of selfishness, and in later life personal vanity was as unknown to his simple dignity as it would have been contradictory to his lofty aims and refined tastes. He achieved enormous labors, as he passed along, and, once accomplished, he left them behind in silence and dismissed them from his mind.

Dr. Johnson's ideas were simple, laborious and unprophetic. He wrote, in the plan of his *Dictionary*: 'I know that the work on which I

am engaged is generally considered as drudgery for the blind, as the proper toil for artless industry, a book that requires neither the light of learning, nor the activity of genius; but may be successfully performed without any higher quality than that of bearing burdens with dull patience, and beating the track of the alphabet with sluggish resolution.'

Webster had from the first far higher ideas of the province of the lexicographer. He considered him an investigator of ideas, of past history of language, of roots and kinship of tongues; he wished to be a reformer, a discoverer, a prophet and yet an antiquary, and he held that the largest reach and broadest scope of study is a duty as well as a pleasure to the dictionary-maker. This very breadth of view interfered for the time with his success, yet Johnson encountered equal discouragement for his representative book—representative of his times. For he wrote to Dr. Burney:[1] 'I remember with great pleasure your commendation of my Dictionary. Your praise was welcome, not only because I believe it was sincere, but because praise has been very scarce. A man of your candour will be surprised when I tell you that among all my acquaintance there were only two, who upon the publication of my book did not endeavour to depress me with threats of censure from the public, or with objections learned from those

[1] Charles Burney, 1726-1814, the musician, writer and charming man of the world, but perhaps best known as the father of 'Fanny' Burney (Madame d'Arblay), the author of *Evelina*.—[Ed.]

who had learned them from my own preface. Yours is the only letter of good-will that I have received; though indeed I am promised something of that sort from Sweden.'[1]

Dr. Johnson wrought seven years with six amanuenses, and with a certainty of being at least supported through his mighty undertaking, for five firms of booksellers agreed to take the huge scheme in hand and to give Johnson £1575 for his share of the work.

Webster wrought single-handed for forty-three years at the study of language, and for twenty-eight years at the making of the *Dictionary*, never condescending to an amanuensis until he was eighty years of age, when—in revising—his eyes became unequal to many hours of labor, with but few means of support outside his own personal earnings, and but small promise of help from any source.[2]

But for twenty years his fame has been growing, and is higher at this moment than ever before. The younger students of philology have lifted up their voices. Cambridge of England, that stronghold of conservatism, has adopted the *Revised Dictionary* as its standard,[3]

[1] Reference not found.—[Ed.]

[2] 'The making of a dictionary under this modern conception of its aims [an inventory of the language] is naturally something very different from the task of Johnson or of Webster * * * What it has meant in point of elaborateness may be understood from the fact that the readers for the "Oxford Dictionary" have numbered upward of two thousand, while the quotations collected * * * have been about six millions.' Ben. E. Smith in *The Evening Post*, April 24, 1912.—[Ed.]

[3] Written between 1885 and 1892.—[Ed.]

and scholars first—and afterward, through the knowledge diffused from them, the masses—will recognize that while the subdivisions of labor among the German philologists have enabled them to spend their separate forces on small parts of language, and thus immensely advance philological knowledge far beyond Webster's scheme, and also settle the scientific methods of study, yet among them all there is not one who better grasped the general principles of etymology and orthography, or who has applied his great knowledge to reorganizing a language for the benefit of his nation and the English-speaking race. And he did this with little help from books or libraries or learned men, but by the unaided force of his own intelligence, driven by the love of knowledge and a desire to serve his country.

Max Müller, in *Chips from a German Workshop*, speaks twice of Webster's *Dictionary* as the representative dictionary of the age.[1]

It is plainly seen that language borrows new life and blood from even slang terms. It is renovated, as the nobility of England enrich their race and their posterity by intermarriage with the stronger blood and fibre of the commoners. Language now and then—like the classic Antæus—must touch the earth, the common soil, to keep itself wholesome and vigorous.

And time has answered the various objections to Webster's changes. The nation for which he

[1] Volume iv. pp. 68 and 485.—[Ed.]

wrote has appreciated this very multiplicity, while scholars well know the advantages of a copious and varied vocabulary. For the large books succeed. From the very nature and habits of the American people, books which give a great deal of general knowledge on the ordinary themes of the newspaper, the common school, the pulpit and the Lyceum Desk are the ones sought for. The large hymnbooks and encyclopedias are the popular ones, and Webster's books, written to educate the great masses, all have something of this encyclopedic character. The advancement in arts and sciences demands new words and terms; these are coined in some sudden moment to express new ideas; they receive currency because they are necessary, become a vital part of language and must have place in a dictionary. Our mixed American race, with a country which dips into three zones of climates, involuntarily invents new terms, and if these express ideas with simplicity and truth they are at once adopted as children and heirs. As to foreign terms, they also should not be treated as aliens and denizens, but be given their rights as citizens and permanent settlers on the soil. They come to us freighted with life and meaning.[1]

* * * * *

It has seemed best to supplement my mother's estimate of Webster's life and work by some quotations from one who may be considered a more impartial judge.—[Ed.]

[1] See Appendix XLII. below.

'Webster's entire career was marked by simplicity, but not without ambition. He had a childlike hopefulness, a manful sturdiness of character, a noble insistence upon what he considered to be right as determined by an honest search after the truth, and an unconquerable perseverance. During the twenty years spent in the preparation of the dictionary his income was practically derived from the royalty on his speller. He began his work in the face of opposition and ridicule, and its prosecution seldom met with encouragement or approbation from others. His later years after the publication of the dictionary, were clothed with honor, but not untroubled. The dictionary had proved a disappointment financially. The first edition was too expensive for popular sale, being typographically ill-suited for publication in a condensed and economical form; and it was not until the right to publish the work was acquired by George and Charles Merriam that Webster's family received any income from it at all commensurate with the reputation that the book had made for its author.[1] * * *

'Webster's life work was essentially finished with the publication of the Dictionary in 1828. Nearly thirty years of teaching, school-book writing, pamphleteering, lawyering, lobbying, research, newspaper editing, and dictionary making, all marked by earnest strife in support of his own convictions, had developed in him a purpose and ambition that dominated the remainder of his life, and a belief that he was competent to achieve his purpose,—the making of a diction-

[1] In this connection it is not unfitting to mention that about the year 1872 the sale of Webster's *Dictionary* was vastly increased by an arrangement entered into between Gordon Lester Ford as business manager of the New York *Tribune*, and the Messrs. George Merriam, publishers, of Springfield, Connecticut. By this agreement the *Dictionary* was offered as a premium for certain terms of subscription to the newspaper, the book thus reaching very large numbers of our rural population, and in turn extending the circulation of the paper, which was at that day—and perhaps still is—the representative Republican sheet.—[Ed.]

ary of the English language that should make him the benefactor of his countrymen. To the work of fulfilling this ambition he had devoted himself for twenty years with a singular constancy and self-denial, and finally received a larger reward than falls to most of those who labor single handed in so large a cause.

'What is the real value of his work? That question, as I have already said, is not answered by pointing to the series of dictionaries that originated with his, and which now keep his name actively before the public. These have perpetuated Webster's devotion to truth and accuracy, but have also served to attribute to him in the mind of the unthinking public an unfailing omniscience, which any scholar knows he could not have had, however great and epoch-making his own work may have been.

'Conclusions based on mere smatterings of knowledge about the literary usage of Webster's time and of the periods before and since his time, or on a general knowledge of the changes in American literary usage that have taken place since his day,—such conclusions are essentially worthless. Certain facts, however, are available from which we may make an estimate that will in the main be true. Such an estimate will be broadly based upon a consideration of the general development of dictionary making prior to 1828; of Webster's qualification for his work; of the main improvements in plan and execution introduced by him; of the reputation acquired by Webster's dictionary before it was essentially changed; and of the use that has been made of his work by subsequent lexicographers.' * * *

'The dictionary of to-day is made by a corps of trained specialists and editors; the dictionary of Johnson's day and of Webster's day was made by one man, who had to collect single-handed, with the aid of his copyists, the terms and illustrative citations in all fields of literature, art, and science, furnish the etymologies, indicate the pronunciations, analyze the senses, and make the definitions. What manner

of man was, therefore, best suited to make such a dictionary? A man who, like Johnson, had devoted himself to a life of authorship, who was not a man of affairs, who was not a politician (I use "politician" in the good sense), who was not specially trained in any science or technical branch of learning, a man of narrow sympathies who gave the reins to his prejudices, his ill-humor, and his personal, political, and national dislikes, and embodied them in the definitions of his dictionary,—or a man who, like Webster, was raised as a farmer's boy, lived the life of a ordinary New Englander, who, as Webster himself says: "is a husbandman in summer and a mechanic in winter; travels about the country; confers with a variety of professions; reads public papers; has access to a parish library, and thus becomes acquainted with history and politics; and is in every case a theologian"? * * *

'I believe that Webster's broad education, the broad sympathies that he acquired in his varied career, the general grasp of ideas which his experience gave to him, his open-minded receptiveness, his sturdy perseverance, the wish to be helpful, the wish to be right for the sake of the right, all contributed to make him a fitter man for the work that he undertook than Johnson could have hoped to be. There was an earnestness of purpose, a determination to be fit, a determination to be just, a determination to be true, which Johnson in a large degree lacked. Johnson pursued his work to get a living and denounced its drudgery. Webster pursued his work because he looked upon it as a high calling, a privilege, and because he believed it was worth while. Johnson was a literary genius: Webster was not,—but literary genius is not essential to lexicography.[1] The capacity to be honest, the capacity to think right,

[1] 'The emphasis has been shifted from literary taste to linguistic fact. * * * The lexicographer must not select, but must record. * * * To make, to use Trench's phrase, an "inventory of the language."' See Ben. E. Smith in *The Evening Post*, April 24, 1912.—[Ed.]

a logical mind free from prejudice or bias, and a mind with broad sympathies, is of the most vital importance to lexicography. Johnson's genius gave him at times a grace of expression and an appreciation of literary values that Webster lacked. As a whole, however, there is little room for literary grace in making dictionaries, but there is continual necessity for just the qualities that Webster had and Johnson lacked.

'Dr. Murray has said that "Webster was a great man, a born definer of words"; but he was more than that; he was a great lexicographer because he was receptive, conscientious, level-headed, fair-minded, and keen-witted. His was the genius of honest and infinite pains. Dr. Murray also said, in the next sentence, that Webster "unfortunately, like many other clever men, had the notion that derivations can be elaborated from one's own consciousness as well as definitions, and he included in his work so-called etymologies of this sort." This is neither true, nor just, nor consistent. A born definer of terms does not elaborate definitions out of his own consciousness; he makes definitions that are exact and true because he is free from distorting bias and has unusual natural powers of understanding and analysis, with which he has coupled an unusual fund of knowledge. In the light of modern philology, Webster's etymologies are, it is true, largely ridiculous, but they were no more absurd in his day than was the religious belief that fettered him to a biblical genealogy as the basis of his linguistic researches. Had it been true that he believed etymologies to be a matter to be elaborated from his own consciousness, he would not have felt the necessity of spending ten years in making a comparative study of twenty languages, but would rather have elaborated them from consciousness as Kant did his philosophy. Webster was, indeed, unfortunate in not having those broader philological associations that would have made known to him the contemporary trend of philological

research, and would have introduced him to the labors of Bopp and other German workers, whose methods after all must have been not so different from Webster's, though more wisely directed. Had he possessed such associations, it is quite possible that he might have anticipated later discoveries.

'Webster's improvements over the work of his predecessors were such as might be expected of such a man. Johnson, a literary genius, made an essentially literary dictionary, listing and defining the terms and senses that occurred in the literature that he knew and cared to read. Webster, the man of affairs, the man with an insatiable thirst after knowledge for its own sake, the man of many and broad intellectual sympathies, with a bent to research in history, science, and linguistics, made the best dictionary that he could to meet the wants of such a man as himself. Webster had the true historical instinct, and his work represents a distinct advance in that respect over Johnson's. He did not originate the historical method of lexicography, nor did any of his successors in the same field of labor. That was a slow growth, of which the first development was the attempt to trace the senses of words from their originals, which Johnson refers to when he says, "in every word of extensive use, it was requisite to mark the progress of its meaning, and show by what gradations of intermediate sense it has passed from its primitive to its remote and accidental significations; so that every foregoing explanation should tend to that which follows, and the series be regularly concatenated from the first notion to the last." If this is not historical I know not what to call it. In pursuit of the same idea Webster spent a dozen years; and says: "There is a primary sense of every word, from which all the others have proceeded; and whenever this can be discovered, this sense should stand first in order." In fact the etymologically primary sense of a word is usually its first sense in English, and in Webster's day knowledge of the

origin of words was the only means open to him of attempting a historical development in his definitions. The modern historical method is but a development of this, widened by the possibilities of modern means and scholarship.

'In general scope or ambit Webster's work is larger and more scientific than Johnson's. He aims not merely to give the literary words of the language and the names of common objects, as the more familiar plants, etc., but to cover the entire vocabulary of English, literary, technical, commercial, and the better vernacular and colloquial terms. He had not the prejudices that would impel him to declare with Johnson, that the technical terms used by "the laborious and mercantile part of the people cannot be regarded as any part of the durable materials of a language, and therefore must be suffered to perish with other things unworthy of preservation." This is not equivalent to saying that he was entirely without prejudice. His lack of familiarity with the earlier authors read by Johnson and his strong puritanism impaired his judgment with respect to such authors as the early Elizabethan and pre-Elizabethan dramatists, whose slang and cant Webster considered part and parcel of their vulgarities. * * *

'Webster's attitude in defining a term is uniformly that of an indifferent party. He had the only true conception of a dictionary,—that its function is to tell what words mean, and not to pass upon the merit of the ideas conveyed by the terms defined. He also had the modern impersonal attitude that forbade giving expression to his likes and dislikes. Johnson, to express his contempt for the men pensioned by the government, defined a *pensioner* as: "A slave of state hired by a stipend to obey his master;' and he took occasion to flout Lord Chesterfield by defining a *patron*, as: "One who countenances, supports, or protects. Commonly, a wretch who supports with insolence and is paid with flattery." Webster, too, had his dislikes, but he was a man rather of convictions than of

prejudices, and I believe you will look in vain in his work for a single definition that is not a fair statement of what he conceived the meaning of the word defined to be with those who used it. Thus neither Federalist, nor Tory, nor Whig, contains any hint of Webster's own attitude to the parties referred to, and yet his pamphlets show him a root-and-branch Federalist. * * *

'Such a man was Webster and such was his work. In concluding, I cannot forbear contrasting Webster's love of, and devotion to, his work with the spirit that animated Johnson, who defined a lexicographer as: "A writer of dictionaries; a harmless drudge that busies himself in tracing the origin and detailing the significations of words." In the making of dictionaries drudgery there is, to be sure; but is drudgery separable from any real work? The life of the ordinarily successful lawyer is filled with drudgery, and so is that of the artist, the musician, the scientist, the artisan, and what not. I do not know that I am prepared to say, with E. S. Gannett, "Blessed be Drudgery;" but if good work is to be done, drudgery must be endured.

'Johnson begins the preface to his dictionary, by saying: "It is the fate of those who toil at the lower employments of life to be rather driven by the fear of evil than attracted by the prospect of good; to be exposed to censure, without hope of praise; to be disgusted by miscarriage or punished for neglect, where success would have been without applause, diligence without reward."

'"Among these unhappy mortals is the writer of dictionaries, whom mankind have considered, not as the pupil but the slave of science, the pioneer of literature, doomed only to remove rubbish and clear obstruction from the paths through which learning and genius press forward to conquest and glory, without bestowing a smile on the humble drudge that facilitates their progress. Every other author may aspire to praise; the lexicographer can only hope to escape

reproach, and even this negative recompense has yet been granted to very few."

'With Johnson's estimate of the dignity of the work and recognition that it receives I need not take issue. The story of his own work and of Webster and Murray are a sufficient answer to that. Language is the most important possession of man, and words are the medium or instrument of its expression, upon the effectiveness and beauty of which largely depends the progress of the human race. Of all books the dictionary exercises the most potent influence upon the form, pronunciation, meaning, and use of words. It is the *arbiter elegantiarum* of all except the few whose learning is such as to fit them to decide for themselves; it is the first resort of our courts of justice in administering law that depends on the meaning of words; and, most of all, it is the helper and instructor of our pupils from the grammar school up. If any man's work be recognized as worthily fulfilling such a purpose, is his meed of praise insufficient? I feel that Webster had a truer appreciation of the importance and dignity of his work than Johnson, even allowing for the added dignity given to the work by Johnson's own labor. Johnson began his work with the expectation or promise of finishing it in three years, and with the magnificent conception that he would, in that time, limit "every idea by a definition strictly logical, and exhibit every production of art or nature in an accurate description, that my book might be in place of all other dictionaries, whether appellative or technical." "But," he says, "these were the dreams of a poet doomed at last to wake a lexicographer. I soon found that it was too late to look for instruments when the work calls for execution, and that whatever abilities I had brought to my task, with these I must finally perform it." He sacrificed his plans and his ideals to finish his work in nine years, concluding his preface by saying: "I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave,

and success and miscarriage are empty sound; I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or praise."

'Webster began his work with the modest ambition, as he said, to "supplement the work of his predecessors and correct some of their mistakes." Finding himself embarrassed by lack of knowledge which he considered essential to his work, he modified his plans so as to be able to equip himself by years of self-sacrificing study. After twenty years of unbroken labor he completed his "American Dictionary of the English Language" the preface to which he concludes by saying: "This dictionary, like all others of the kind, must be left, in some degree, imperfect; for what individual is competent to trace to their source, and define in all their various applications, popular, scientific, and technical, *seventy* or *eighty thousand words!* It satisfies my mind that I have done all that my health, my talents, and my pecuniary means would enable me to accomplish. I present it to my fellow-citizens, not with frigid indifference, but with my ardent wishes for their improvement and their happiness; and for the continued increase of the wealth, the learning, the moral and religious elevation of character, and the glory of my country." This sentiment seems to me to imply a truer conception than Johnson's of the worth of his labor, and to form a more fitting conclusion to such a work.'[1]

[1] *Noah Webster's Place among English Lexicographers*, F. Sturges Allen.

ADDENDA.

The letters which follow came to my notice too late for insertion in their proper place in the text. But as they throw interesting light on certain periods of Webster's life, I append them to my mother's volumes.—[Ed.]

To Benjamin Franklin. A.P.S.

Hartford Oct^{r} 28th 1786.

Sir

Yesterday I arrived in Hartford after a Lecturing Tour thro' the Eastern States, in which my success has equalled my expectations.

The time is expired, that I proposed for my journey to Philadelphia; and altho' I am determined not to be disappointed, by common accidents, yet I labor under some embarrassments which I take the liberty to mention to your Excellency. The profits on the sale of my books which amount now to about £100 per ann. are all appropriated to reimburse the expense I have incurred in prosecuting my designs, so that I cannot with propriety expect any assistance from them for the coming year. My Lectures which have supported me hitherto are closed & I have nothing to depend on for subsistence this year, but my further exertions in some business. I can hardly bear my expenses to Philad^{a}, much less can I support myself there without some business which is not ascertained.

Possibly a subscription may be obtained for a repetition of my Lectures in Philad^{l}. I have thought of instituting an orational academy in that city or New York, or to open

public reading[s] after the plan of Mr. Sheridan in London. I was asked when in Philad[l] by President Ewing, whether I would accept the professorship of Oratory in the University. This I could not do then & I do not know whether I should now be willing. I know not the emoluments of it nor indeed the business. If it requires the attention of a man, like a school, as I suspect from a little acquaintance with M[r] Gamble the late professor, I should not—I could not take it. If the business consists in reading Lectures at stated times, or in hearing the lessons of a class, as the instructors practice in New Haven or Cambridge, it is probable I should be glad of the place.

I shall wait here a few days for your Excellency's answer, if an answer will not be too great a trouble; for in my present situation I know not how to act.

I wish for business—it is my life—my pleasure, as well as my support. But I began a vast design without a shilling, and I know the world too well to ask pecuniary assistance from any person. I want none, I will take none, but what I earn. I wish, if possible, to have business which will afford me some leisure, for my lectures must be prepared for the press as soon as possible, & my Institute stands in need of improvement.

If your Excellency can furnish me with any prospects in either of the ways mentioned, or in any other, it would be a satisfaction to me & enable me to make such arrangements here as will be necessary, if I leave this State.

I have the honor to be with perfect respect

Your Excellency's most obliged &
very humble Servant

To William Young.

H.S.P.

New York December 19[th] 1787

Sir.

I have fixed my residence in this city, where I superintend the publication of the American Magazine. The first

Number will appear, the first of January; and I shall send, if you are willing, a few of them to your care. They will contain probably more original matter than the Columbian, & perhaps some of them will sell in Philadelphia. I shall give fourteen to a dozen and a quartan or twenty fifth. The price will be the same as that of the Columbian. I should be glad sometimes to hear how the books sell, & the opinion of the public respecting the *Selection*.

I believe I left in your office one or two small pamphlets. Particularly one called *Philosophic Solicitude*. If so, I wish to have them preserved for me.

Please to deliver the Enclosed & present My Compliments to M^rs^ Young, M^r^ M^c^Cullock & my other friends, & oblige your friend & very hum^l^ Servant

To James Greenleaf. H.S.P.

Boston February 1^st^ 1789

My dear Friend.

I wrote you last by Capt Armour from New York. I expected that we should have letters before the close of the last year; but six months have elapsed & we have not a line from you. We have heard of the arrival of the Brig in the Texel & she was spoke with on her return in Longitude 25°. We are now in a state of painful suspense, as the wreck of a brig was seen on the 5^th^ ult. off the Grand Bank, the imperfect description of which answers well enough to that of the Eliza. We however feel confident that you are safe in Amsterdam.

Since my last, I have exchanged my residence: You will hear of me in future in Boston. My clear loss by business the last year was about £100, with my time & expenses; or about £250 in the whole. This hurts me sensibly, as it affects my best friends & benefactors. Still I have resources, & I shall exert myself to call them forth to repay their generosity.

There is a company formed for carrying on the Magazine in N York; but I am doubtful of its success—& not very anxious about it.

I still adhere to my resolution of following a profession. It is my best, my only resort. I am correcting my book, which is now in the press, & will be finished in April or May. When it is done, I will send you a dozen Copies. If this work should sell well, it will help me—if not, it will be a further embarrassment.

But I have done with making books. I shall enter upon the pursuit of Law immediately; and practise either in Hartford or this town; for my license will introduce me here, & Mr Dawes will assist me. This remains to be determined. The little property I have will go farther in Connecticut than in Boston. But my affection for your amiable Sister inclines me to remain here. Her friends are here, & altho she is willing to go where my interest calls me, yet I know she will be happier here. My wishes are hers, and if there is a prospect of getting subsistence by business in Boston, this shall be preferred.

I am as happy as the heart of the loveliest of her sex, & the kindness and esteem of all your connections, can make me. Still a union of a more sacred & endearing nature is my ardent wish. In this wish I am not alone; but whatever may be our desires, your sister & myself must postpone a nearer union, till she can be furnished, & I can begin business.

Your sister depends on you for provision for furniture—and I must depend on my own exertions. I shall try to make it convenient to marry in the course of this year; but it depends partly on your assistance, & partly on events that are not altogether in my power.

I shall send this Letter to N York to be forwarded by the first vessel. Your Sister Becca will write you soon, & perhaps her letters will be forwarded with this. Everything here is as usual: Your friends well, & often speaking of you

with a solicitude equal to their affection. Accept their best love.

Politics at a stand. We are all waiting for the New Government. In general I can say, that the friends of the Constitution bid fair to establish it without great opposition. This event however will require management; as the minority in two or three states is respectable.

With anxious wishes for your welfare & prosperity, I am, my worthy friend,

Yours cordially

To the Same. H.S.P.

Boston May 16th 1789

MY DEAR FRIEND.

It is a long time since I wrote to you, but I desired your sister to make an apology for me. My hand has been very weak in consequence of a wound, & is not yet perfectly strong, so that I have had some difficulty to do the little writing which could not be dispensed with. I have finished my business in this town & a copy of my publication will be forwarded by the first vessel bound to Amsterdam. I would send more copies, but I believe they will be useless in Holland.—I am now about to leave Boston & reside in Hartford, where I shall immediately begin the practice of Law, under favorable prospects. I shall find some business, which with the profits of my books which are increasing, will support me in that decent mode of Life which is the most agreeable to me & I believe, to your sister. Becca is all that is good & to *me* all that is dear. If happiness depends on a Union of souls, I am sure we have the most flattering hopes—my only or principal anxiety is, about the first entrance into life; but I shall make such provision, as to preclude the danger of want. It is our wish to be united as soon as furniture can be obtained, & we hope that no inauspicious event will disappoint us. We rely on your

orders for that provision, & we know that your kind wishes will always attend us.

Mr Dawes is gone to New York, & your friends who are acquainted with his business, all wish success to his negotiations.

I wrote you very explicitly last autumn, respecting your brother Robert. Mr Watson was at that time almost discouraged with him; & I am afraid I must have given you pain by my information; but Roberts last letters to me & his friends here, give us great hopes—he improves in writing & there is a prospect that he will please Mr Watson by his assiduous attention to his wishes & his progress in learning business.

We have recd few letters from you. Your october letters never came to hand, Nor any letters by the Eliza to your friends in Boston. Other vessels have come from Amsterdam, but no letters. We suspect—but we know not how your enemies can intercept letters.

Since you left us I have made little enquiry into the state of certificates, & I know not what measures the national legislature will adopt. We are all happy in the establishment of government, & waiting with ardent hopes for its successful operation.

I know what has passed between you & yours & hope never to betray the confidence reposed in me. You have a hard struggle between inclination & a sense of duty; but your good sense & fortitude will triumph over passion: I am sure of your success, but we all share your pains.

I shall be happy to be numbered among those of your friends who have your esteem & utmost confidence. I wish my name to be mentioned & my respects presented to Mrs Greenleaf. Every thing connected with you has a claim to my regards.

With cordial attachment

I am your obliged friend

& humⁱ Servt

To the Same. H.S.P.

Hartford June 6th 1789

MY DEAR FRIEND.

By the last mail from Boston, I have recd a letter from your Sister enclosing one from you to her, by the Dogger's Bank [Doggerbank], dated Jany 21. I am always happy to hear *of* you, tho I receive few letters *from* you. Some I am confident have miscarried. The Eliza brot. none for the family, to our surprize.

As I shall write but little, on account of my hand which remains weak, I shall confine myself to giving you some satisfaction as to my situation and prospects. The *prudence* you discover in your advice, to your sister, is as pleasing to me as your expressions of love. But, my friend, there is reason to believe you have confidence in *her* prudence, & I presume you have some in *mine*. I flatter myself that my love for her, strong as it is, will not hurry me into a precipitate connection. But since I left N York, I have determined upon my pursuits for life; I have made a bargain with Mr Thomas,[1] for a share in the Copyright of my Books, by which I shall receive £200. perhaps £300 in the course of next year, which with my other income will be a provision for the two first years. I am settled here, & as several old attorneys have left practice lately, I shall stand a chance for a share of business. Indeed I have a little to begin with & shall find a friend in Mr Trumbull. So that I think it prudent & best to marry as soon as a house can be obtained & furnished. For this we depend wholly on your goodness, & the sooner you can make it convenient to assist your sister, the sooner you will make us happy. We have habits of economy & industry; but we are perhaps more ambitious to be *good* than *great*. It gives me some pain that Becca will have to leave her friends,—friends which can no where be replaced. But no consideration can separate us, & she will cheerfully go where my interest leads me.

[1] Isaiah Thomas, the publisher.—[Ed.]

For this she is entitled to my warmest gratitude; indeed I hardly know which she has most of, my gratitude or my love.

There is a passage in the letter to your sister which I cannot pass over; you seem to hint that you wish me to make every effort to live by a profession, but if I cannot succeed, then to try some other plan. I would only just remark, that all the difficulties a man has to encounter are at first setting out. I know of few or no instances of failing in the attempt, if pursued; but for three or four years, any man must encounter embarrassments.

I have a father in distress & could I see him relieved I should be under no apprehensions as to myself.

Your letters give us much pleasure, but the pleasure is ever mingled with pain. Wishes are all we can bestow, and of these you have a large share.

I can give you no political intelligence, as I am out of the sphere of information, & concern myself very little with the bustle of public life. So much I believe I may perdict with certainty that our government will be established & give satisfaction. All opposition has ceased, even in Newspapers.

With every wish for your happiness,

I am, my dear friend,

yours cordially

To the Same.

H.S.P.

Hartford October 12th 1789

My dear friend.

Your kind favr of the 9th June is just recieved, by the hands of your brother Robert. I thank you for it and all your other attentions. The return of the maps gives me no great regret; I sent them, because I supposed some of our Western lands would sell in Europe, & thought a map of them would be wanted. But they will be wanted by Mr Morse. His Geography is esteemed here, but there are some inaccuracies in it. In the brief *History*, page 97,

there is a mistake with respect to the government of Massachusetts before the revolution—the Governor only, and not the council, was appointed by the crown; & in the charter governments, laws were valid without the royal assent. Page 121, there is an error respecting the laws of Connecticut, which ordain not that a creditor *shall* take land on an execution, when there is no personal property, but that he shall have his election to take the debtor's body or his lands. If however he chooses the lands, they are not to be sold at auction, but to be set off to the Creditor, at a price fixed by 3 indifferent freeholders, which is not a just payment of a monied debt. I mention these mistakes, because they are my own—having written about 30 pages in that part of the work. My apology is, that I was sick when I wrote it, & hardly able to hold a pen, much less to examine authorities.

Your information respecting my intentions of marriage is just, as you will see by my last letters. Your order for 1000 dollars is complied with & our furniture is mostly purchased. In my next, you m[a]y expect me to call you *Brother*, a name more dear than *friend*; but one that my attachment to you would long ago have warranted.

To this resolution, I am prompted not less by interest than by attachment to the best of women. It is of consequence to a man to be settled, to be known as an established resident & citizen, & to take an interest in society & business, before he can acquire the confidence of his countrymen, & confidence must precede employment. In law as in physic, a young man must make a slow progress in business; his abilities must be *tried*, before he can be much *trusted* with important business. The progress of young lawyers is nearly ascertained in this town. The first year, they get but little business—the second more—the third, may nearly support themselves—the fourth, perhaps make a little money, & after that, they have generally pretty full practice and make one, two or three hundred a year.

I have as good a prospect as my neighbors; better I cannot expect. I believe however my talents for speaking, notwithstanding Mr Watson's opinion, are rather superior to most of our young men's. I judge from debates in our clubs, & the opinions my friends there form of me. Impute this not to vanity; for I am writing to a friend. Any opinion of this kind must be here suppressed. Yet I am confident, perseverance will accomplish any thing; and nothing but sickness or death shall check my efforts. Still I am anxious. The dear Girl who has given me her heart, & who has made a sacrifice of all her natural connections for a union with me, has a claim, not merely to kindness, but to peculiar attention. She has sensibility, and must be very particularly unhappy in any misfortunes that should befall us. I feel already a thousand anxieties on her account. But I have made such provision for subsistence, as will at present enable me to live with a decent appearance. I depend mostly on my books, & were it not for some debts, my income would be ample. My Dissertations will sell slowly, and I have to make payment for them out of the sales of the Institute. On the whole should necessity require it, I should with great reluctance draw on you for some small sum to assist us, knowing that a few years will enable me to return it with an interest more grateful to your generous heart, than six pr cent. We shall be in Hartford—in a large convenient house of Col Wadsworths, where our friends will always find a hearty welcome. You will probably remain [in] Europe some time, for *probably* the system of finance to be adopted by our treasury department will be favorable to your business. What that system will be, it is not certain; but we know the *men*, and the opinion is that our debts will be funded on four & half pr cent interest. Congress have a recess till January. Their laws are going into operation peaceably & to much satisfaction. No appointments are made abroad, except Mr Carmichael at the Court of Madrid. I am not in the center

of intelligence but all the useful information I can get, shall be communicated.

Your brother Robert gives much better satisfaction to Mr Watson—he evidently is becoming more emulous, manly & independent.

The melancholy fate of our friend John Loudon, killed in a sham fight of militia, of which he was adjutant, is a subject on which I cannot dwell.

I thank you sincerely for your kind wishes & shall endeavor to make some return by my own prayers for your prosperity & happiness, and by a delicate attention to your amiable sister, whose welfare is so near to your heart.

I am with perfect esteem & affection
Your friend & humⁱ Servᵗ.

To the Same. H.S.P.

Hartford December 4th 1789

My dear brother.

I wrote you a few lines from Boston, the week of my marriage. I now sit down by [our] own fire side to give you further particulars. Becca & Priscy are at my elbow, & we three compose our little family; a family as happy as the purest affection can make it. Our house is convenient, & sufficiently large & elegant. It is in the pleasantest part of the City; the rent 100 dollars. Your Sister, Becca, whose mild temper you know, has showed less reluctance at quitting her family, & connections than I expected. She is all that is good to me; and is in general cheerful. Sometimes a gloom sits upon her face for a few hours, when Boston takes full p[ossession] of her heart; but consid [torn]

My fathers affairs give me more trouble than my own. He owes a large sum & has just had an attachment laid upon his estate. He cannot raise the money, & the probability is, he must, in his old age, be driven into the

new settlements in a reduced situation. This wounds me deeply. I want money, not merely to live, but also to purchase a Law Library without which I cannot do business to advantage or arrive at eminence. You kindly offer to assist me in case of necessity; but I have pride, & so has your sister. But we have stronger objections in our sensibilities, than in pride, to accepting any assistance from a brother, who has done us both so much good. I am sure we have gratitude, and our hearts must be wounded, to be obliged to take anything of you. I beg you [torn]t it; but if you [torn]

Every monied man in the state is purchasing into it & the principal is rising. If the United States should assume the state-debts, ours will be on as good a footing as the federal; if not, it will be on a better foundation, as it is principally held by men who manage the government of the state. I consider speculation in the funds of this state, as much safer than in the federal debt; & the latter I believe to be very safe. Perhaps the necessary vouchers for transferring stock in Amsterdam cannot be obtained of our Comptroller & Treasurer; but if not, I can purchase stock for you & deposit with any agent you shall name—recieve & negociate interest for you, &c Mr Watson will purchase to the amount of £30,000, if he can obtain such vouchers as he likes; a[t any r]ate he will [torn] largely; and I am [torn]

I will give orders to Mr Watson to recieve some of my Dissertations in New York & forward to you. I should have sent you more, but I supposed the present would hardly have been acceptable to any of your friends.

I have only to conclude by giving it as my opinion, that you or your friends can not vest money to so good advantage in any other way, as in the debt of Connecticut, because the interest is regularly paid—and I should not want a better business than paying 6 or 7 per cent interest on specie vested in the principal of this State. If you can find any

business for me of this kind, my talents, such as they are, and the strictest a[torn]ll be given to it [torn] [1]

To the Same. H.S.P.

Hartford December 25th 1789

My good Brother.

It is a fine Christmas morning & I have a little leisure to devote to you. Your Sisters & myself were last evening at a very brilliant Assembly, & every body was happy. Indeed were it possible for any thing to make one happier, than I am merely from my connection with Becca, my satisfaction would be increased by the affections of the people in this City for her. Every one admires & loves her, and she is treated with all the attention & respect which I can wish. This must give *you* pleasure as well as *me*, for I remember how much you Loved your Sister Becca. She is all that is kind & amiable ; and you may rest assured that I now realize all my former ideas of her worth. I believe I may safely say that our happiness is not exceeded in the world ; for so far as our hea[r]ts are concerned, our happiness is without alloy. This is said after *two months* living together, and the probability is I shall always be able to say the same.

I have however some anxieties which I endeavor to conceal from her ; arising from unexpected incidents. I stated to you in a former letter that we had made some miscalculations in purchasing furniture. Your sister purchased her chintz furniture at first setting out, which with the china & looking Glasses intrenched farther on the money than their just proportion, so that when articles of perhaps more necessity came to be purchased, the money fell short. The 1000 dollars would not wholly pay the bills for the necessary kitchen furniture. I discovered the mistake & sent your

[1] Of this letter only the upper parts of the four pages remain, as the sheet has been torn across the middle.—[Ed.]

sister notice in time to prevent some purchases she intended to make for our best room; but still the expenses then incurred over run the money; & these with her necessary marriage clothing, made a deficiency of considerable amount. She used the money with economy; not expending much more, if any, than 100 dollars in clothing & dresses. The deficiency however was to me wholly unexpected, till a short time before our Union, and when I informed your sister, she cried as if to break her little heart. I have appropriated some money to pay the bills of furniture; which money I had designed for family expenses, & must apply still more. This will embarrass me some, till I can recieve the proceeds of the winter sales of my books. I have however almost determined to draw on you for 200 dollars, rather than raise money at a loss or give your sister any uneasy feelings. I am afraid I do wrong, but will push the sale of books now on hand & propose to answer a bill which I wish you to draw on me next Spring to the same amount. I flatter myself you will cheerfully do me this favor; the trouble on your part will not be great; and it will be affording me all the assistance I want.

The funds of America are rising, in consequence of the expected system of Finance. What this will be I know not; but every effort is making to persuade the s[t]ates to give all their debts into the management of the Gen[l] Government. I apprehend however that funds cannot be provided to pay six per cent on the whole. *Four & a half* & perhaps *three* pr Cent interest would satisfy the Creditors at present. At any rate Congress will pay as much as they can now; for we hear nothing of *spunging* the debt, so that purchasers are perfectly safe.

Accept the kind love of your good sisters & particularly of Your affectionate friend & brother

To the Same. H.S.P.

Hartford April 17th 91

Dear Sir.

It is long since we have rec[d] letters from you; but we hear that letters from you were rec[d] for Boston last evening by M[r] Colt. By this circumstance we imply your welfare. I believe I can tell you no news of consequence, either public or private. Your sister & the little Emma are very well, except Emma's teething, which gives *her* pain & *us* trouble. We jog along comfortably well & very happy. Becca has now been absent from Boston almost 18 months. She sometimes sighs for a visit to her dear relations, and about the last of next month, we expect to make it, with Emma. We hope to meet M[r] & M[rs] Pope in Boston at the same time, & enjoy the happy interview.

Of myself I have nothing to say, but that I think my prospects good. My business is increasing, tho small. Att[ys] are multiplying & the business diminishing. So that *eminence* alone can ensure full success. This is a spring to emulation & I shall have the advantage of a better law library than three fourths of my competitors. Besides you will recollect that I always believe my talent to lay in *speaking*. In this you differed from me. But while I acknowledge your better opinion in most articles that respect myself, in this I have some proof that I am not mistaken. I will only add that so far as I can judge, the world is upon better terms with me.

My property has become very valuable to the proprietors. Could I have kept my copyright in my own hands till this time, I might now have rid in a chariot. But I was obliged to sell the most valuable part, for present subsistence. The whole right is worth to the proprietors, at this moment, about 2000 dollars annually, & I was able to get little more than that for the whole right of 14 years, so much better has it become within a short time! I have however a

reversion in New York, which, after 2 years, may be worth 3 or 400 dollars annually.

My dear brother, you have been long absent—when shall we see you? Have your negotiations answered your expectations? Will your business admit of your returning to America? These are questions interesting to your friends to whom you are dear. Our public affairs are prosperous. Gov[t] & revenue are established on a firm foundation.

How is M[rs] Greenleaf & the little *governor*? We wish you & them all possible happiness.

The ship which conveys this goes directly from this port & will probably return here. Becca will write—accept her affectionate remembrance & that of your obliged & grateful brother

To the Same. H.S.P.

Hartford October 13[th] 1791

Dear Brother.

It is a long time since I wrote to you, but in that long time, few events either public or private, have occurred which deserve rehearsal.

I[n] private life, I am very happy. My family generally blessed with health & spirits, & hitherto we have found a Competence. The business of lawyers is at a lower ebb than was ever before known, while the number of them has been increasing, till some who have been in business ten years scarcely maintain their families, & would gladly relinquish the profession, if they had any other means of obtaining subsistence. However the little business I have with my books will keep me along some years, till we can push off some of the old Lawyers. In this decay of business however we good patriots have some consolation; for it discovers a prosperous unembarrassed state of the citizens in general. Indeed the establishment of funds to maintain public credit has had an amazing effect upon the face of business & the country. Money circulates freely & every one almost

appears to [be] contented & easy. Commerce revives & the country is full of provision. Manufactures are increasing to a great degree, & in the large towns vast improvements are making in pavements & buildings. Indeed you may easily conceive what an immense difference it would make in a young country, to have fifty millions of dollars in public paper rise from a sixth part of its value to par in a few months. Such an astonishing increase of capital or active stock in this country must have great effects, & stands unparralleled in the history of commerce. The loans of state debts ceased the last of September—it is believed they are mostly filled. The duty on Spirits or excise has gone into effect peaceably in the Northern States, & will be supported. We hear of no complaints, except in the back parts of Pensylvania, among the wild Irishmen, who distil great quantities of grain for their own use. This duty will be productive, & there is no doubt but the funds will support our credit. The expedition ag^{t}. the Indians this season will occasion a considerable extra expense, but it is improbable, that this expense will continue long. In short, no country at present is so flourishing—no country in the world affords such a field for speculations both in paper & land. And these speculations in lands will not end these many years; as it is impossible that our vast tracts of wilderness can be taken up in a few years. I have lamented that in the general scramble for property, I had not a small capital to employ; as the purchase of paper was attended with no risk, & I wished to add a few thousand dollars to my means of living—it would have made more cheerful hours in my little family. But I am not discontented as it is; as I am convinced I shall never want, while I have my health. Had I more property, I should gratify some of the strongest desires of my heart in projecting & carrying into effect schemes of public utility; but which I cannot bring forward with advantage, because I have not influence enough. *Money gives that influence.* This circumstance of

my life gives me more mortifications than any regard to property from other motives. However I think my influence is growing, as it is; & I believe it best for a man to grow slowly. The trees which are long acquiring their full growth are firm wood & durable. Those of rapid growth make poor timber.

I hope your success in business has been such that you have not felt the advances made to me. As soon as I can sell the remaining copy right in my hands, (which will not be much short of two years) I shall be able to refund you all with interest. Necessity only reconciles me to the anxiety which I every day feel on this account.

I am pleased with your provision for brother Robert & I am, if possible, more pleased to find he is satisfied & attentive himself, & that M[r] May is satisfied with him. He has given much anxiety to you & all the family.

It seems M[rs] Bell is to be left without a husband; at least her husband is fast declining. I hope, should this event take place, her friends will all be resigned—& she, be provided for.

You[r] good sister Becca has the love of every body. The best people in this county are making applications to put their daughters under her care, as she is esteemed a model of good breeding & amiableness.

Little Emma Scholten is charming. Would to heaven I could see little James by the side of her prattling! Kiss the little fellow for me & present my kindest regards to M[rs] G——

With great affection I am
Dear Brother
Yours,

H.S.P.

To the Same.

Hartford May 4[th] 1793

Dear Brother.

The news of your arrival on our shores has produced great rejoicing in our family. We congratulate you on this

event & hope soon to see you at our Mansion. The sooner the better, as Becca will not probably sleep much till she sees you. Even the sight of a friend from Boston deprives her of one night's sleep—how will your arrival then affect her! Your [you] know her sensibility & how much she loves *you*. Besides our Brother Dawes will probably be with us this afternoon—if I could persuade him to stay till next thursday—our Election day; & see you here at that time, it would be a most agre[e]able interview.

Becca joins me in love. We are well now, tho we have been all sick.

Yours affectionately

To the Same. H.S.P.

Hartford June 24th 1793

Dear Brother.

Your kind favr of the 21st. Current is just recd. Your information of Mr Child's having a partner is what I expected from the firm of the house in the papers. But this does not prove to me that he will not take another partner. Perhaps he will not; & perhaps, if I knew his partner, *I* should not be willing to be connected with the house. But abstracted from these considerations, if Mr Ch—— has the same views I have of the book-selling business, he will probably have no objections to an enlargement of Capital. From the present state of America I form *my* ideas of this business. A young Country, with a population rapidly growing; where a greater proportion of the people are *readers* than in any other country, & these people growing rich & flourishing: These are extraordinary circumstances. The booksellers are every where extending their business—a sure proof of encreasing demands for books—indeed facts in this State warrant my opinions, for the most obscure towns in Connecticut are furnishing themselves with considerable libraries.

I am informed by experienced Booksellers that their business is profitable in proportion to their capital—a large assortment & variety being necessary to command extensive custom. There is indeed a limit beyond which this is not true; but when *printing* is connected with *selling*, a capital is absolutely necessary—for a large stock must always be on hand. Yet I am persuaded that printing for the wholesale business will be profitable, if well conducted.

Add to these considerations, the copy right of my books the sales of which, at this moment, neat [nett] between 600 & 1000 dollars annual profit, in the City of N York. Not to mention the Prompter, the copy right of which is of no small value, & is now solicited by Mess Thomas & Andrews of Boston. Since you left us, I have rec^{d} a letter from one of the Tutors of Yale College, informing me he was about to introduce my 'Dissertations' into College among the Classical Books. Should this be imitated, the Copy right will be valuable. I should therefore bring into [the?] Company some advantages which no other person can at present in this Country.

You ask me whether I think of any other person—I confess I hardly know of another in New York. I wish you to wait a little for M^{r} Childs arrival, which may be in the Packet, which is already on the Coast.

M^{r} Allen, in Queen Street; M^{r} Gaine, & M^{r} Rivington are the persons I most esteem in their professions. A M^{r} Fellows, from New England, a man of liberal education is beginning the business in N York; but is *new* in it, & I believe has not much capital. I know of no man in the City, who unites so many advantages, of capital, establishment in printing & respectable character, with good connections as M^{r} Childs. At least none who would be likely to wish for any partner at all.

D^{r} Appleton writes me to think of Boston. The *Boston Book Store*, he thinks, from the declining health of M^{r} Blake, will soon be to be disposed of & it is a good stand.

To this plan there are objections. The not having my own copy right there is decisive ag^{t}. it. Besides Boston is not so good a place for business & you will perhaps hardly believe it, but Becca seems not to wish to return to Boston. This, *entre nous*, may be pride, but is it not laudable? Certainly, if she cannot live as her Sisters do—which perhaps she ought not to expect at present. At any rate Boston must be given up—at present.

I should not be very apprehensive of beginning business *alone*, but I believe it to be ineligible for several reasons—however much will depend on *your* opinion—& more still on your assistance, which, as it will be proportioned to your generosity, will probably exceed your ability. I wish it may not, for wherever my lot is cast, I am resolved to bring my views & expenses within the compass of my business. All I ask, (or ever wished) is *business*, & whether on a large or small scale, I will be satisfied with it. To renounce all literary pursuits, which are now very congenial with my habits, would not be altogether agreeable; but it would not make me unhappy. There are many pleasures in agriculture, & if our plan of *book-selling* upon a pretty extensive scale should fail, my *second* wish would be a farm. A man with a just mind & moderate talents may be respectable in almost any department of business.

Apropos—Is your land in N York State settled? Do you wish for settlers? Where does the land lie & what is the quality? What terms do you hold out to encourage settlers? Connecticut is the place for settlers, & advantageous terms might draw a Colony from this neighborhood.

I am happy to hear that M^{r} Lagarenne as well as yourself are safe in N York. The extreme heat made us anxious for you. Pray present him our best respects.

Becca & the little ones are very well—rather better than when you left us. Accept our most tender love & believe me with esteem & affection

Your friend & brother

To the Same. H.S.P.

Hartford July 8th 1793

Dear Brother

When on your way to Boston you desired me to make out a list of my debts, that you might see it—on your return, you did not mention it—whether thro forgetfulness, or from delicacy, is not material. I have no secrets to withhold, nor the least objection to comply with your request. All I regret is that my affairs should be added to the catalogue of your perplexities.

	dol
A note in favr of Col Wadsworth principal & interest to July 1793 - - -	450
Do—to Ebn Bernard jun—do - - -	440
Do to Wm Greenleaf - - - -	270
Ballance due to D Greenleaf - - -	230
Ballance due to S Loudon—on bond—about - - - - - -	150
A note to S. Lawrence - - - -	50
—ballance to S Hilldrup - - - -	100
—due to John Chester &c - - -	50
—a few small debts—perhaps - - -	75
	1815

The two principal debts above grew out of the expenses of my *education* (which contributed to involve my father & finally to ruin him,) out of the expenses of my Southern Tour in 1785—& out of the expenses incurred by publishing my Dissertations in 1789, which was a clear loss of above 400 dollars. Some of the other accounts you have had explained to you; the others are recent expenditures for support of my family.

Since I saw you, I have paid shop & mechanic bills &c to the amount of the 200 dollars so kindly advanced me.

To discharge this amount of debts is beyond my power.

The debts due to me are

	dol.
From Albany - - - -	550-/400 of it 1st of last May but not yet paid/
From H & Goodwin- - -	50
On books & collectable about -	80
	680

Add the value of my Copyright in N York for which I have been offered 1250—Total—1930. But the proposed purchase of my copy-right was attended with some conditions that render a sale to that person ineligible or rather impossible. I doubt whether I could get more than 1000 dollars for it, were I disposed to sell. The property of my other books may be of some value—especially the Prompter —perhaps 100 dollars—but on these no calculations can safely be made.

If I survive 11 years, & the copy-right of my Institute returns to me again, as it will, the present sale of it, *without increase*, will render it worth to me at least £2000—but nothing can be drawn from this resource at present. This [is] a short statement of my affairs, & as nearly correct as I can make it, without seeing my creditors books and notes. It is bad enough, in all conscience; it is a situation that has made me very unhappy, since I dispaired of business in my profession. If I remove to N York or Boston, it will be best to sell my *Law library entire* which will bring 300 dollars, or nearly—perhaps my chaise also. which will bring 120 or 130 more.

On these points it will be time enough to decide hereafter.

Becca joins me in kind respects to Mr Lagarenne & most affectionate love to you. I hope you will soon be extricated from your perplexing connection. From a hint I have lately had, I believe a late Clerk of Mr W—capable of direct intentional fraud—but entre nous—Tout a fait.

Yours cordially

To the Same. H.S.P.

Hartford Sept. 2d 1793

Dear Brother.

I have settled a plan of business & formed a partnership with Mr George Bunce a young man of good character & ability in printing. We are making preparation for beginning business, as early as November, perhaps earlier. Mr Watson kindly offered to look me a house, & I hope he will have success.

I found my family very well, better than when you was here. Emma embraced me & was too full to speak. Becca will be easily reconciled to a removal, & to a crouded City, provided business will support us, & the prospect is certainly good. She is very well & sends her kindest love.

We are this day informed by letters that Mr Symmes of Phila is dead, & Sally is left a widow.

I am yours affectionately

To the Same. H.S.P.

Hartford Oct. 23d 1793

Dear Brother.

I have determined to bring my servants with me—no further trouble on that head. A woman to take care of the children will be absolutely necessary very soon after our arrival. I see a young woman advertises in Child's paper, who says she can produce an unexceptionable character, as a seamstress, & will take care of children. It is probable she would answer our purpose, if to be hired at a re[a]sonable price. What makes it necessary to have one provided *now*, is our two children, & female servant must be inoculated immediately on our arrival, & you may easily concieve that Becca will have much to do for the first two or three weeks. Some Lady of your & our acquaintance will no

doubt cheerfully take the trouble of making some enquiry.

We shall not be in N York by the first Nov, but I hope within a few days of it.

Be assured of our love & believe me yours in affection

To the Same. H.S.P.

Hartford 16. Oct. 1793

My Dear Brother.

I rec[d] a letter from you by mail two days ago, & Becca has this day rec[d] one by M[rs] Wilson. In answer to both, I have rec[d] money enough from the sale of my Law-Library & some debts due me, to settle all small accounts & some others. For these purposes I shall have no use for money. I have no advance of capital from my patrons, till I arrive in N York in *propria persona*—yet we are obliged to advance money for press, letter & paper. I hope to be able to do this by drafts on our own house at *long* sight—if not, I will trouble you with a draft for 100 dol. at *sight.*

As to what you mention in Becca's letter, respecting provision for the winter, I would answer, that I suppose *most* articles to be always in Market. *Wood* is the greatest that demands an early provision, & if the cellar of the house we are to occupy is empty, I wish ten or fifteen cords, half hickory & half oak, to be procured. Cider is not much drank in N York, but I shall always make it [a] table-drink, & 6 or 8 barrels at least will be wanted. I believe it will not bear freight from Hartford. Apples we shall want, & I believe, it best to purchase three or four barrels of some good fruit—perhaps more. These are however generally in Market. Potatoes & other vegetables I believe are always in market, but perhaps they are cheaper at this season. I wish you to enquire of house-keeper[s] & act for

my interest, by taking advantage of the market. I rely on your discretion entirely. Butter & a few small articles we shall bring with us. We shall probably be in New York in season to procure a supply of hams.

We shall want a few articles of furniture, but it is not necessary now to mention them, except perhaps a *bed*—which we shall want, if we enlarge our family. A poor man here who owes me furnishes a sacking bottom, but I believe we must get every other part of it in New York. Perhaps there will be time enough, after we arrive.

Becca has been a little unwell, as well as myself, but we are better again.

In sentiments of sincerest affection She joins

your friend & brother

To the Same. H.S.P.

Middletown Oct 31st 1793

Dear Brother.

We are just arrived here. Our goods are on board, we shall sail in the Schooner, Polly, Capt Pitkin, probably tomorrow or next day, but when we shall arrive in New York depends on the winds. It will be best that the house be ready in two or three days, as it will be absolutely necessary our furniture be unloaded the day we arrive.

Becca has a crying child in her arms, and I must relieve her. She sends love as does your friend & brother

To the Same. H.S.P.

Sunday morning March 2d

Dear James.

The enclosure, in your kind note of this morning, is very acceptable, as an aid in supporting my dear family, &

the business of which you speak in a flattering manner. I however value much more, 'your *increasing* esteem.' It is no small gratification to me, that the spontaneous expressions of my own sentiments & opinions, meet the approbation of men of good sense & liberal views.

Additions are slowly, but constantly making to our list of subscribers. Yet it is certain that the paper will no more than bear its own weight, the first 6 months—& very little more, the first year. I have rec^{d} from my patrons 2000 dollars, of which less than 1200 are invested in stock in our business—the remainder I have appropriated to the payment of private debts, & the necessary provisions for my family—chiefly the former. My resources are exhausted, and I have already anticipated 300 dollars by a discount at the bank. I hope to recieve more money from some Gen^{n} in this city, but I am not certain of it. A thousand dollars at least will be necessary to carry on the business of our office, this year; beyond what we shall probably recieve. And on the 20th April I must if possible, pay brother Daniel upwards of 500 dollars; which will be the last of my present debts, except the one due to Col Wadsworth.

If I am pressed at any time I shall call for temporary assistance from you. My knowledge of your distress for money & the numerous demands of *other* friends, has prevented me hitherto. Becca & myself have sometimes hard struggles to keep our spirits up, but we have dismissed one servant, & we endeavor to retrench every unnecessary expense. The *necessary* expenses almost exceed calculation; but of one thing I am certain, that if I can procure capital enough to carry on & enlarge our business, & can sustain the *first* difficulties of establishing a paper, where *three* others are already established, the business will ultimately become lucrative. I would only suggest further that I think my patrons in this city might do much more for us than they do, in procuring a liberal subscription. I think

they leave the paper too much to itself—personal applications & private recommendations are very useful at the commencement of this undertaking.

Accept this ingenuous relation of my affairs, as one proof of my confidence & *increasing* gratitude from yours

To the Same. H.S.P.

Saty.—11 Oct. [1794]

Brother Greenleaf.

Becca's delicacy & gratitude will not permit her to make a complaint to you. I therefore undertake the task myself.

We have no more help in the family than is necessary for ourselves & we cannot on every occasion procure it. When you are at home the house work is greatly increased, & Becca is compelled to become servant herself & work in the kitchen. This she would not complain of; but the perpetual run of company, often thrown upon her without notice or preparation, wounds her pride & delicacy extremely. In many instances she has been so much mortified, as to be hardly able to sit at Table. Do not say this is false delicacy—it is not. We cannot *reason* agt *feeling*. You cannot concieve how unhappy you make her.

Our children are now ill—Becca is also in feeble health. Many times lately she has been obliged to sit at table, when nothing but your company has kept her from her bed. As her husband and her friend I am deeply wounded by her situation. I beg of you as you regard her happiness to say not a word to her on this subject—She has not yet recovered from her shock on a late occasion. I tell you the truth & only beg that after this day, you would consult your sister, before any company is invited.

Yours

To Thomas Bradford. L.C.[1]

N York 25 Augt 97

Sir

By the Severn Capt[n] Fairley from Hull we have London papers to July 5[th]. & Hull papers to July 8[th].

The substance of the important intelligence is, the signing of the definitive Treaty between France & the Emperor. The arrival of Lord Malmesbury & the French Commissioners at Lisle to enter on negotiations for peace. The Mutiny on Board two Ships of Lord Brid[g?]port's fleet. The Execution of Parker. The Recognition of the Batavian Republic by the King of Prussia, who approaches his Exit. Admiral Duncan is anchored off the Texel, but as 72,000 French Troops appear to be embarking, he demands a Reinforcement. Pastoret in the Council of 500 has declared that the Arret of the Directory respecting the United States, of the date of March 2[d] is equivalent to a declaration of war. The differences between the Legislative & Executive of France have risen to a most alarming Height. Capt[n] Eaton of the Marlborough arrived from his Ship at the Admiralty and stabb'd himself mortally with a Dagger. The Verdict of the Jury pronounced him lunatic.

I am Sir

Your Obed Serv[t]

To Mathew Carey. H.S.P.

New Haven, Aug[t]. 18[th] 1806

Sir.

I have a copy of a Grammar now ready for the press; & agreeable to my promise, give you the offer of it for publication. I have other applications, but yours has the prior claim. My price for the entire Copy right is $750 dollars. It will make from 200 to 250 pages duodecimo in

[1] Inserted in a copy of *The Prompter*, 1815.

Long Primer, with brevier notes. It would please me to have the first impression printed here, that I might inspect the proofs, but this is not indispensable.

Your decision on the offer will oblige

Sir, your humˡ Serᵗ

APPENDIX I.

THE WEBSTER FAMILY.

The titled family of Webster in England seems to have resided in the county of Sussex and was settled at Battle Abbey. One of them was verdurer of the forest of Waltham, and others of the family were connected with the Royal Navy. There has never been any attempt to trace the pedigree of John Webster in England.

APPENDIX II.

SETTLEMENT OF HADLEY.

'They made a beginning at Hadley in that year [1659] but did not remove their families until 1660—perhaps a few removed in 1659. A company came up in May 1659, and laid out the street, the homelots, &c., and made preparations for settlement. Gov. Webster came up to regulate, & to see how things went on, in June—he doubtless lodged in Northampton. He was taken sick, and made his will June 25. It was unquestionably written by Mr. Russell, the minister of Hadley, or Mr. Mather, the minister of Northampton, both of whom are witnesses. I conclude he was sick at the house of William Holton, whose wife is noticed in the will. Mr. Holton was from Hartford, & probably one of his old friends. He lived on the lot next north of that on which the jail stands. Gov. Webster recovered from this sickness, & settled in Hadley. He died there April 5, 1661. It was the second death at this plantation.

'Mr. Trumbull states that he was buried in Hartford; but from the desire expressed in his will to be buried at the

New Plantation is it not probable that he was buried in Hadley?[1]

'A court was held alternately at Northampton and Springfield before the settlement of Hadley. On the 25th of September 1660 the court was holden at Springfield, & John Webster first appears as one of the Judges, or Commissioners as they were called. The record is—"For holding this courte there were present, M^r^ John Webster, Capt. John Pynchon, M^r^ Samuel Chapin, and Elizur Holyoke, Recorder."

'On the 26th of March 1661 "Mr. Webster and 13 other persons belonging to the New Town at Norwotuck" (Hadley had not then received its name) took the freeman's oath before Pynchon & Holyoke. Mr. Webster was apparently in health at this time; he died 10 days after. I am not certain whether Mr. Webster died on the 5^th^ of April, or was buried on that day; as in the early records of Hadley the day of burial is put down in some cases instead of that of the death.' *Letter from Sylvester Judd to Noah Webster, Jun.* Northampton, November 9th, 1835. [W. MSS.]

'Webster, Gov. John. This gentleman probably came into Connecticut in 1637, or in the autumn of 1636. His first appearance as an officer of the Court was in April, 1637. He was then one of the Committee, who for the first time sat with the Court of Magistrates for the purpose of declaring war

[1] From WILLIAM PORTER. W. MSS.

'Hadley Feb^y^ 18^th^ 1824.

'I have agreable to your request sent a man and have taken a Coppy from inscription on Tomb stone of your ancestor which is as follows

'"To the memory of John Webster Esq^re^, one of first Settlers of Hartford in Connecticutt, who was many years a Magistrate or assistant, and afterwards Deputy Governour and Govenor of that Colony and in 1659 with three sons, Robert, William, & Thomas, associated with others in the purchase & Settlement of Hadley where he died in 1665 this monument is erected by his descendant Noah Webster in 1818."

'M^rs^ Porter & my daughter Lois join me in affectionate Salutation & Respect to you & your Family. Caroline being absent at Auburn.'

Endorsed: 'The death of John Webster is stated to have been in 1665—This is a mistake—It was in 1661. N. W.'

against the Pequot Indians. He was again the same year elected to the General Court, and was also elected as one of the committee (deputy) in 1638. He was elected a member of the Court of Magistrates at the first General Court holden by Gov. Haynes, in April, 1639. From this time forward for many years he was a member of the General Court as a magistrate or assistant. That the public may appreciate the arduous services of Gov. Webster, I take the liberty of stating, that in 1639 he attended four sessions of the General Court—three sessions in 1640—four in 1641—three in 1642—five in 1643—five in 1644—five in 1645; and held five sessions of the Particular Court in 1639—four in 1640—two in 1641—two in 1642—six in 1643—five in 1644—six in 1645, and four in 1646—and so continued faithfully to discharge all the duties of the responsible and important offices bestowed upon him by the people for years. He was uniformly a magistrate or assistant while he remained in the colony after 1638. He was appointed with Mr. Ludlow and Gov. Welles to consult with their friends in the New Haven Colony, respecting the Indian murders which had been committed, to learn of them whether they would approve of a declaration of war as a reparation of the injury, in 1640; he was appointed with the Hon. William Phelps, to form a law against lying, and to hold a consultation with the elders upon the subject. He was of the committee with W^{m} Phelps, &c, who formed the noted criminal code of laws for the Colony, reported and approved by the General Court in 1642—several of which laws yet remain in our statute book with little alteration, except in punishment. In 1655 Mr. Webster was elected Deputy Governor of the colony, and the following year was made Governor. In 1654 he was appointed with Maj. Gen. Mason a member of the Congress of the United Colonies.—Enough is already said to show the elevated position held by Gov. Webster in the colony while he remained in it. He was the first in this country who gave the high character for talent to the name of Webster, which has been since so nobly and amply sustained by Noah as a man of literature and Daniel as a statesman and orator. Many of his descendants yet reside in Connecticut and Massachusetts. Gov. Webster was from Warwickshire, in England, and was an original settler in Hartford as early as 1637, when he was a member of the General Court. He greatly aided and improved the new form of government in the colony.

The severe quarrels in the churches at Hartford and Wethersfield so disgusted, not only Gov. Webster, bu [*sic*] 59 others of the settlers in the colony, that upon the 18th day of April, 1659, they signed an agreement, in which they engaged to remove themselves and families out of the jurisdiction of Connecticut, into Massachusetts. Gov. Webster headed the list of names. About three fourths of the signers did remove to Massachusetts, and purchased and settled the town of Hadley, which then included what is now Hadley, South Hadley, Granby and Amherst, east of Connecticut river, and Hatfield and a part of Williamsburg west of the river. Gov. Webster became a Judge of the Court in Hampshire. He died in 1661, and left four sons, Robert, Matthew, William and Thomas. He also left three daughters. Matthew settled in Farmington, William in Hadley, Thomas moved to Northampton, afterwards to Northfield, and was driven from the latter place by the Indians; he then located at Hadley, but finally returned and died at Northfield. His daughter Ann married John Marsh, of Hadley, the other two married Markham and Hunt.

'Robert, the eldest son, appears to have remained in Hartford, where he died in 1676.

'Robert left six sons and four daughters. The daughters were connected by marriage with the families of Seymours, Mygatts and Graves, some of the most respectable settlers.' *A Catalogue of the names of the first puritan settlers of the Colony of Connecticut.* Royal R. Hinman [edition of 1846], p. 91.

APPENDIX III.

MARY REEVE WEBSTER.

'She was sent down to Boston in April, 1683, and the Court of Assistants was held at Boston, May 22d; Gov. Bradstreet, Deputy Gov. Danforth and nine Assistants being present. The record of the court follows:—

'"Mary Webster, wife to William Webster of Hadley, being sent down [from Northampton] upon suspicion of witchcraft and committed to prison, in order to her trial, was brought to the bar. The grand-jury being impannelled, they, on perusal of the evidences, returned that they did indict Mary Webster, wife

to William Webster of Hadley, for that she, not having the fear of God before her eyes, and being instigated by the devil, hath entered into covenant and had familiarity with him in the shape of a warraneage,[1] and had his imps sucking her, and teats or marks found on her, as in and by several testimonies may appear, contrary to the peace of our sovereign lord, the king, his crown and dignity, the laws of God and of this jurisdiction—The Court on their serious consideration of the testimonies, did leave her to further trial."

'At the Assistants' Court, Sept. 4, 1683, Mary Webster, wife to William Webster of Hadley, having been presented for suspicion of witchcraft, &c. by a grand-jury in Boston on the 22d of May last, and left to further trial, was now called and brought to the bar, and was indicted by the name of Mary Webster, &c. [Here the indictment of May 22d is all repeated; the warraneage comes in as before.] To which indictment she pleaded not guilty, making no exception against any of the jury, leaving herself to be tried by God and the country. The indictment and evidences in the case were read and committed to the jury, and the jury brought in their verdict that they found her—not guilty.

'The expenses of the colony about Mary Webster, appear in the accounts of the colony treasurer, viz.,

	£	s.	d.
'Bringing down Mary Webster from Hadley to prison, - - - - - - - - -	5	0	0
'Witness about Goodwife Webster, - - -	12	15	2
'Robert Earl for keeping Mary Webster in Boston,	4	0	0
'Cash for carrying Mary Webster to Hadley, -	2	0	0
	23	15	2

'This acquittal must have elated Mary Webster, and disappointed many of the people of Hadley, whose numerous written testimonies, drawn up with care, had failed to convince a Boston jury, that she was a witch. Sometime after this trial, the power of this enchantress was supposed to be exerted upon Lieut. Philip Smith, who died on the 10th of June, 1685.' [See Cotton Mather's *Magnalia.*]

1 'Warraneag, in some Indian dialects, was the same as the Nipmuck wallaneag or woollaneag. It was the name of the fisher, or pecan, or wild black cat of the woods. All the testimony on which the indictment was founded came from persons in Hadley. She had undoubtedly been searched for witch marks by some of the women of Hadley.'

'The "disturbing" of Mary Webster by the Hadley young men, is thus related by Hutchinson: "While he [Philip Smith] lay ill, a number of brisk lads tried an experiment upon the old woman. Having dragged her out of the house, they hung her up until she was near dead, let her down, rolled her sometime in the snow, and at last buried her in it, and there left her; but it happened that she survived, and the melancholy man died."'

* * * 'Mary Webster was the fourth person sent from Connecticut River to Boston to be tried for witchcraft, and all were acquitted,—an indication that the courts were inclined to mildness. No inhabitant of Hampshire was ever executed for witchcraft. * * *

'It is not known that Mary Webster annoyed the people of Hadley by her witch pranks after 1685. Her last eleven years may have been spent in quietness. The inventory of her small estate after her decease, in 1696, included a bed and a few other things for housekeeping, and some articles of dress. She had a Bible, psalm-book and three sermon books, which were probably left by her husband.' *History of Hadley*, Sylvester Judd, p. 237.

APPENDIX IV.

WILL OF JOHN WEBSTER. W. MSS.

From the Probate Records of Hampshire County.

'Here followeth a true copy of the last will & testament of Mr. John Webster, late of Hadley, deceased.

'I John Webster, late of Hartford in the jurisdiction of Connecticut, being weak of body, yett sound of mind, & having my perfect understanding doe ordayne this to be my last will & testament in manner following—

'Imprimis—I committ my soule into the hands of the Almighty and most merciful, hoping to be saved by the alone meritts of the Lord Jesus Christ, being washed with his blood, and clothed with his righteousness and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, Amen:—

'My body also I bequeath to the earth to be interred with comely burial (if at this time I be taken out of this world) in some part of the new plantation on the east side of the river against Northampton.

'Moreover my worldly goods which the Lord hath blessed me with, and left mee as a father's portion, I bestow as followeth—

'To my deare and beloved wife Agnes Webster, I give one bed and comely furniture for the same;—As also my house & lands att Hartford, all the profitts of the same during her naturall life. And upon her decease, all shall come into the hands and be at ye dispose of my Executor.

'Item—to my son Matthew Webster, I give the sum of ten pounds.

'Item—to my son William Webster I give ye sum of seventy pounds.

'Item—to my son Thomas Webster, I give ye sum of fifty pounds.

'Item—to my daughter Marsh, I give the sume of Twenty pounds.

'Item—to my daughter Markam, I give ye summe of Forty pounds.

'To my Grandchild Jonathan Hunt, I give the sum of forty shillings.

'To my Grandchild Mary Hunt, I give ye sume of ten pounds.

'To all my grandchildren in New England, I give ten shillings apiece.

'To Mary, the wife of William Holton, of Northampton in part of recompence for her great love and paynes for me, I give forty shillings.

'To my son Robert Webster, I give all the remaynder of my estate of one kind and another, whom also I do appoynt and ordayn to be my sole and full executor of this my last will and testament.

'My will further is that the foresaid legacyes should be paid within fifteene months after my decease, so farr as my personal estate (that is all my estate beside houses and lands) will reach, and the rest within eighteen monthes after my wives decease.

'Which of the legacyes shall be paid first, or how much of them, I leave to the discretion and faithfulness of my son Robert, desireinge yt if there appeare any difference, he would in it take and act by the advise of my loving friends Nathaneel Ward and Andrew Bacon who have been acquainted with much of my mind herein. Only my just debts I would have first paid before ye legacyes; as also my funerall expences.

'My Lott at the New Plantation with ye accommodations thereunto belonginge, I give to my sons William & Thomas

upon condition of their inhabitinge there, as I myself was engaged to doe, which is also my desire they should :—And so doing, to have it equally divided between them.

'In witness hereof I have sett to my hand this present 25 of June 1659.

'JOHN WEBSTER.

'In ye presence of
'John Russell, Junior.
'Eleazer Mather.

'And that this which is above written was the last will & testament of Mr. John Webster, late of Hadley, deceased, Mr. John Russell, Junior did take his oath at the courte at Northampton, March 26, 1662. And Mr. Mather took his oath thereto before John Strong and Lieut. Clarke (authorized thereunto by said Corte) the 15th 2d Mo. 1662.' (15th of April.)

WILL OF ROBERT WEBSTER. W. MSS.

The last Will and Testament of Lieuten^t. Robert Webster of Hartford. The inventory of his property was £670.

'Whereas I Robert Webster of Hartford am at present under the holy hand of God and brought very weake by sickness, yet not, througe mercy, destitute of my understanding, doe see cause to sett my house in order & doe declare this to be my will & testament as followeth—first I commend my soule to God in Jesus Christ, hopeing for the pardon of all my sins through the meritts of Jesus Christ my Savior & my Body to the earth, hopeing for a glorious resurrection. And for that estate which God hath blessed me with all I give and bequeath it as followeth ; after my just debts are honestly pay^d out of my estate The remainder of my estate I give unto my dear & well beloved wife, Susannah Webster during her widowhood, not doubting but she will have a tender care of o^r children & will help them as she is able. But if my wife change her name then I give her but one third part of my aforesay^d estate. The remainder being to bee equally divided amongst my children excepting my eldest a double portion & if any of my children dye before they come at age, that is to say my sonns at the age of twenty-one yeares & my daughters eighteen yeares of age, my will is that it be equally divided amongst those that

shall survive, also I desire my wife to be carefull in bringing up o^r^ children in the knowledge & feare of the Lord & I doe heare charge & command my children that they carry it dutifull to their mother, & that they labour to know and feare the God of their fathers, and that they serve him with willing heart and minde, that he may bee with them & bless them, when I am gathered to my fathers, I doe also appoynt my loving wife to be sole executrix to this my last will & that she may have some refuge to repayre unto for councill as any occasion may call for either about my estate or dispose of my children : I doe desire my loving Friend John Coale Sen^r^ & Andrew Benton Sen^r^ & John Blackleach of Hartford to be overseers to this my will & testament & for confirmation of the same I hereunto set my hand and Seale.

'ROBERT WEBSTER & a Seale.

'This 20^th^ day of May 1676.

'Testes Thomas Stedman.

'Phineas Willson.

'At the office of the Secretary of State in Hartford, Nov. 14, A.D. 1835.

'I hereby certify that the foregoing Will is a true Copy of Record in this Office.

'ROY^L^ R. HINMAN, Secretary.'

WILL OF SUSANNAH WEBSTER. W. MSS.

'The last will and testament of Mrs. Susannah Webster, late of the Town of Hartford, Widow, Deceased.—

'In the Name of God, Amen, the three & twentieth day of January in the year of our Lord One Thousand, Six Hundred Ninety and eight, in the tenth Year of the Reigne of our Souverigne Lord William the third, by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland. Defender of the faith, &c. I, Suzannah Webster in the town of Hartford, in the County of Hartford, within the Colony of Connecticut in New England, Widow (Sole Executrix of the last Will & Testament of my Honored Husband Robert Webster, late of said Hartford Deceased), being of good and perfect remembrance, laud and praise be to Almighty God. Knowing that I am Naturally born and Ordained to dye, and to pass from this

Mortall World & transitory life, and minding to sett my House in order, do now make and Ordain this to be my true, only & last Will and Testament, and I do hereby revoke and renounce all former & other Wills and Testaments whatsoever heretofore by me made by word, writing or otherwise howsoever. That is to say, first I committ & bequeath my Soul & spirit into the hands of Almighty God, my Creator & Heavenly Father, by whom of his meer and only grace, I trust to be saved and received into eternal rest, through the death & merits of my Savior and redeemer, Jesus Christ, and my body (hoping for a Joyfull and Glorious resurrection) to a comely Christian Burial, by the discretion and at the charge of my Executors hereinafter named. And touching the distribution of both that Estate late belonging to my Dec^{d} husband Robert Webster above named, and of those temporall goods & Estates which God hath blessed me withal, My will is that the same be distributed & disposed as followeth, that is to say, In the first place I will & ordain that all those just debts which I shall happen to owe at my decease, and my funeral charges be fully paid and defrayed by my Executors herein after named, out of my Estate, which said debts that I then shall owe being defaulted and my funerall charges deducted.—I give, grant, devize & bequeath to five Sons, That is to say, To Jonathan, Samuell, Robert, Joseph & William Webster, and to the now surviving Children of my Oldest Sonn, John Webster deceased, That is towit, John Ebenezer, Jacob & Daniell, Sarah, Ann and Abgail, the full sum of One hundred pounds, in Current Silver money of New England, (being so much as was given me by my good friend, M^{r} John Hull of Boston deceased), their several parts of which Sum, is & shall be recorded, deemed & accounted as included & comprehended in the lands hereinafter to them respectively by me assigned sett out, devized, given & bequeathed, the which legacy or devize I make to them especially in consideration of their prudence, Industry & help in paying the debts of my Deceased Husband Robert Webster, their Father above named, and saving the Estate.—Also I give, grant, sett out, devize & bequeath to my above named Grand Children, that is to say, John, Ebeneza, Jacob & Daniel, Sarah, Ann & Abigail Webster in right of their Father, my said son John Webster deceased, all that Capital Messuage Tennement, Barn, Outhouses and eight Acres of land (being part of the Home-lott of my s^{d}

deceas[d] Husband) and their appurtinances, situate in Hartford aforesaid To have & to hold the said Messuage with the Appurtinances to them my said Grand Children (saving their Mother's right by law) and to their Heirs forever.—Item, I give grant sett out, devize & bequeath to them my said Grand Children Co-heirs of my said deceased Son John Webster Two Acres and twenty-six rods of Meadow land at the Eastmost part of my Meadow lott, situate in Hartford aforesaid. To have & to hold (saving their Mother's right as aforesaid, to them & their Heirs forever.—Item, I give, grant, sett out, devize & bequeath to them my said Grand Children, Co-heirs of John Webster aforesaid deceased, one fifth part of my lott or and in the West Division, both as to quantity & quality, situate in Hartford aforesaid, To have & to hold (saving as aforesaid) to them & their Heirs forever. * * *

'And furthermore I give, grant, sett out, devize, bequeath unto my aforenamed grandchildren, John, Ebeneser, Jacob|& Daniell, Sarah, Ann & Abagail, co-heirs to my deceased son John Webster and to my five sonns, viz. Jonathan, Samuel, Robert, Joseph and William Webster all the right, title and interest which I have or ought to have or which their father my late husband, Robert Webster had or ought to have in and unto a certain tract of land of three hundred acres, formerly granted to him by the General Court of this Colony, the situation and boundaries whereof are not certainly known. * * *

'And I give &c to my Grand Children, the children of John Webster, deceased, and my five sons, all the right, title and interest * * * unto a certain Tract of land on the East side of the Connecticut river in Hartford, purchased from the Executors of the last will and testament of Joshua, Indian Sachem, deceased.' * * *

'Signed, sealed and delivered,
'Published, pronounced, declared
'by Mrs. Susannah Webster
'(being of perfect memory) as
'her last will and testament
'in the presence of us
'Caleb Stanley, Sec.
'Samuel Richards.'

APPENDIX V.

JOHN COTTON SMITH.

That old friends and classmates may in later life grow as wide apart in sympathy as the Poles, we quote the following letter copied from the original by Joel Benton :

From JOHN COTTON SMITH to GEN^L GEO F MORRIS — W. MSS.

Sharon House, June 10th/55

'MY DEAR GEN^L

'I send you "the Bible by Noah Webster"—which I found in our Library—Also the specimen of Webster's orthography which I copy from the fly Leaf of his folio Dictionary, where it is in Governor Smith's hand writing—and is entitled

"A specimen of Websters orthography (in part) selected from his various dictionaries, five in number, and no two alike—

"A *groop* of *Neger wimmen* black as *sut* were told to *soe* and hold their *tungs* ; but *insted* of *soing* they left their *thred*, regardless of *threts*, and went to the *theater*—where they saw as *grotesk* an exhibition as you can *imagin*, to wit, a *Porpus*, a *Zeber*, and a *Lepard* from an eastern *iland* ; also a *ranedeer*, a *woodchuk*, a *racoon*, a *weesel* and a *Shammy*. Likewise a *gillotin*, a *chimist* with specimes of *granit*, and a *hucster* with his *cags* and *fassets*, and above all a *Specter* rising from a *sepulcher*, a most *redoutable fantom* full seven feet in *highth*, his *color* of *ocher*, a *hagard* face, eyes without *luster*, a *lethen* cap *crouded* with *ribins* and *fethers*, a *somber cloke*, an *opake scepter*, in one hand, a *marvelous saber* or *cimetar* in the other ; and with these *accouterments* he *vanted* his *valor* and *thretened* to *massacer* every *hypocrit* and *libertin* present. Wherat the *neger-wimmen* were frightened and ran home—But for this *hainous misbehavior* their *steddy superior* being at no loss to *determin* on the proper *disciplin*, in his *suveran* pleasure tied them up by the *thums*, and with the *vigor requisit* to punish such *maneuvers* denied them their *Maiz* and *Melasses* !"—

'I have laughed much while copying the above—It tells the whole story in a nutshell of *Websters innovations*.'

APPENDIX VI.

THE SPELLING BOOK.

'"The American Spelling Book, or the first part of a Grammatical Institute of the English Language" was published in October, 1783, the author being then twenty-five years of age. In spite of the conservative prejudices of the average mind the book was a success. * * * When first published it encountered an opposition which few publications have sustained with success. It nevertheless maintained its ground and its reputation was gradually extended and established until it became the principal elementary book in the United States. In a great part of the Northern States it was long the only book of the kind in general use; and later was much used in the Middle and Southern States.'[1]

The first edition of five thousand copies was exhausted in the course of the following winter. These five thousand copies were probably a greater supply of spelling books for schools than the whole country contained when Webster took his first lesson in reading at a common school some twenty years before.

In a later note Webster says: 'My spelling book was first attacked by a writer with the signature of *Dilworth's Ghost*. It was said, and never denied, that the writer was a Mr. Hughes, an old teacher in New York before the revolution, father of Colonel [Udney] Hughes of the American army, with whom I was afterward acquainted. I believe Mr. Hughes retired from New York in the revolution and retired to Dutchess County.

'The first numbers of *Dilworth's Ghost*, I believe are lost. I can find no copy of them among my papers.'

The controversy called out:—

N. Webster to Dilworths Ghost, Feb. 7.15. 1785. [See Diary.]

Philo dilworth, a Poem in the Monitor, March 1st, 1785, probably by Mr. Barlow.

Dilworths Ghost, Monitor, March 8th 1785.

[1] Reference unknown.—[Ed.]

To WILLIAM D. WILLIAMSON. Chamberlain MSS., B.P.L.

New Haven May 6th 1837

*** 'Of the precise number of my Spelling Books published, I have no account; but from the returns of the publishers for more than 30 years past, it is probable that the whole number is at least fifteen millions.'

'Up to 1865 the whole circulation had been about 42,000,000 copies. ***

'As the case stands, there can be no doubt that this little work is intimately associated with the primary education of a greater number of minds than any other book ever used in this country. The present generation [1865] of living men and women, in almost every part of the land, when they go back in memory to their early school days find their thoughts resting upon this, as their only and all-important text-book. Many a gray-haired man or woman can remember the time when every hard word in its columns on which they were liable to stumble was mapped out in their minds; its exact latitude and longitude fixed; its location definitely marked; just as a pilot knows the place of every rock and shoal on which a ship may strike when entering a harbor.'

'The parents who learned to read out of its pages asked the same experience for their children, and the flat prairies of Illinois, and the oak openings of Michigan used the same book as the little hillside school house of New England. 'The [Civil] war has most seriously diminished the circulation by closing to us the trade with the Southern States.'[1]

From D. APPLETON & Co. W. L.

(Copy.) '24th. Jan. 1900.

'DR. HENRY BARNARD.[2]

'DEAR SIR:

'In response to your inquiry in regard to the sale of Webster's Speller, we would say that the sale of this book from

[1] *Congregational Quarterly*, Rev. I. N. Tarbox, vii. part i. p. 4.

[2] Henry Barnard, educator, born in Hartford 1811, graduated at Yale 1830, Connecticut legislator 1837-1840, 'where he

1876 to 1890, the year in which we transferred it to the American Book Company of this City, was about eleven and one half million copies. We cannot give the sale since the latter date as we have not the records.

'Hoping that this information will serve your purpose, we are

'Very truly yours,'

The spelling book was repeatedly published in a pirated form without any acknowledgment to the author. Indeed both in England and America this trespassing and pirating was the frequent accompaniment of Webster's successful school books.[1]

Many attacks of piracy and criticism followed during his later years. The complaints, remonstrances and even suits, some libelous, some for violation of copyright, some for downright dishonesty which progressed for forty years would fill a volume by themselves, and the strangest contradictions were seen of bookmakers who struck at Webster's system with one hand, while they pillaged his ideas with the other. It seems not worth while to more than touch upon this vast but empty history.

APPENDIX VII.

COMMUTATION.

'Friday, Jan^{y}. 17th.

'Mr. Webster & Mr. Judd agents for the deranged officers of the Massachusetts & Con^{t}. lines were heard by the G^{d}. Committee in fav^{r}. of their Constituents. The sum of their representations was that the s^{d}. officers were equally distressed for,

advocated reforms in prisons, insane asylums, and the common schools.' From this time until 1870 he occupied various public positions in different states, effecting many changes for the better in their school systems. From 1867, United States Commissioner of Education. Edited valuable educational papers, and wrote voluminously himself on such topics.

[1] 'The success of these undertakings of Webster [the Spelling Book] and Morse [the Geography] is to be classed among the wonders in literary history.' * * * They 'for a long while maintained a universal popularity. It is not saying too much that these books were great books for the advancement of popular knowledge.' *Old New York*, J. W. Francis (ed. of 1858), p. 341.

entitled to, & in expectation of provision for fulfilling the rewards stipulated to them, as officers retained in service.' *The Writings of James Madison*, Gaillard Hunt, i. p. 317.

Webster subsequently wrote : W. MSS.

'The popular discontents respecting the commutation of half pay appeared in Massachusetts. In February 1784, a committee of the towns of Wrentham & Medway, with the advice of the selectmen of the towns of Franklin & Billingham, sent a letter to the Selectmen of the town of Boston, & to all the towns in the county of Suffolk, to take into consideration the commutation, & also the act of Massachusetts granting an impost to raise a revenue to congress, without proper restrictions. The committee further voted to desire the several towns in Suffolk to choose a delegate or delegates to meet at the house of M^rs^ Woodward, in holder [*sic*] in Dedham, on the third Wednesday of March, to take into consideration these subjects & advise to some measures for the redress of grievances.

'A town meeting was held in Boston ; the letter from the Committee of Wrentham & Medway, was laid before the meeting, & the subjects debated. On the 15^th^ day of March, the town, by their clerk William Cooper, returned an answer, expressing their disapprobation of the county meeting proposed, & of any attempt to oppose the resolves of Congress. This letter, it is believed, prevented any further proceedings of town on this subject.

'These letters are published at large in the Connecticut Courant of March 30. 1784.'

[See Diary for 1784.]

To SAMUEL ADAMS.[1]

'Hartford, 24th March, 1784.

'SIR—

'The importance of this communication will, I flatter myself, be a sufficient apology for the freedom I take of writing to a gentleman with whom I have not the honor of an acquaintance. You are very sensible, sir, that an unconstitutional body of men, the Convention, headed by a few designing characters,

[1] For this and the following letter, see *The Life and Public Services of Samuel Adams*, William V. Wells, iii. p. 207.

principally Tories, have for a long time been endeavoring to throw the State into confusion, and crush the most illustrious characters. The leaders in order to support the faction, hold up this idea to their constituents, that the States are disaffected with Congress, and are disposed to take measures similar to the *constitutional* plan in this State. It is said, Sir, that their Committee of Correspondence have written to several gentlemen in other States, among whom your name is mentioned. It is reported that in your answer you reprobated the proceedings of the convention in the most explicit manner. It is the wish of several gentlemen here, that, in order to show the deluded people of this State, many of whom are honest and well meaning, in what point of view the convention in this State is considered by our sister States, your letter to their committee might be published in our papers. For this purpose, I now send to you requesting a copy, and permission to publish it, either with your name or without it, as will be most agreeable. We conceive it could do no injury to the author, and would be very beneficial to this State. The convention begin to be suspected, and a few efforts of good men may soon bring them into contempt. If you can comply with this request, and so soon as to have the letter published before the next election, April 12th, you will probably do a public service, and particularly oblige

'Your very humble servant,'

From SAMUEL ADAMS.

'Boston, April 30, 1784.

'SIR,—

'I was favored with your letter of the 24th March; but by a multiplicity of affairs, which it happened I was at that time engaged in, I was prevented returning your answer so speedily as you desired. For this reason, I afterwards thought an answer would be of no importance. Decency alone, however, should have induced me to acknowledge the favor. I hope you will excuse the omission.

'Some time in the month of September last, a gentleman in Connecticut, by his letter, requested me to give him my opinion of a subject (I think) too much altercated in that State as well as this,—the commutation of the half-pay granted by Congress

to the late officers of the army for life, for full pay during the term of five years. I did not hesitate to say in return, that Congress was, in the nature of their appointment, the sole judge of the necessary means of supporting the late army which had been raised for the defence of our common rights against the invasions of Great Britain ; and if, upon their own deliberate counsels, and the repeated representations of the Commander-in-Chief of the army, they judged that the grant of half-pay for life was a measure absolutely necessary for the support of a disciplined army for that purpose, they had an undoubted right to make it ; and as it was made in behalf of the United States, by their representatives authorized to do it, each State was held in justice and honor, even though it should seem to any to have been an ill-judged measure, to comply with it. Because States and individual persons are equally bound to fulfil their obligations ; and it is given as a characteristic of a good and honest man, that 'though he sweareth, (or promiseth) to his own hurt, he changeth not.' I moreover acquainted him, that, although I was never pleased with the idea of half-pay for life, for reasons which were satisfactory to myself, some of which I freely explained to him, yet I had always thought that, as the opportunities of the Officers of the Army for acquiring moderate fortunes, or making such provision for their families as men generally wish to make, were by no means equal to those of their fellow-citizens at home, it would be but just and reasonable that an adequate compensation should be made them at, or as soon as conveniently might be after, the end of the war, and that therefore a suitable compensation had fully coincided with my views of justice and policy.

'Nothing was mentioned in his letter to me respecting county conventions or their proceedings, and therefore I made no observations upon them. I hope it will not be in the power of designing men, by imposing upon 'credulous though well meaning persons' long to keep this country, which may be happy if they will, in a state of discord and animosity. We may see, from the present state of Great Britain, how rapidly such a spirit will drive a nation to destruction. It is prudent for the people to keep a watchful eye over the conduct of those who are intrusted with their public affairs. Such attention is the people's great security ; for the wisest and best of men are

liable to error and misconduct. But there is decency and respect due to constitutional authority; and those men who, under any pretence or by any means whatever, would lessen the weight of government, lawfully exercised, must be enemies to our happy Revolution and the common liberty. County conventions and popular committees served an excellent purpose when they were first in practice. No one needs to regret the share he may have had in them. But I candidly own that it is my opinion, with deference to the opinions of other men, that, as we now have constitutional and regular governments, and all our men in authority depend upon the annual elections of the people, we are safe without them. To say the least, they are useless. Bodies of men, under any denomination whatever, who convene themselves with a design to deliberate upon and adopt measures which are cognizable by Legislatures only, will, if continued, soon bring Legislatures to contempt and dissolution. If the public affairs are ill conducted, if dishonest men have crept unawares into government, it is our happiness under American constitutions the remedy is at hand, and in the power of the great body of the people. But circumspection and wisdom at the next election will set all right, without the aid of any self-created conventions or societies of men whatever. The whole people will not probably mistake their own true interests, nor err in the judgment of the men to whom they may safely commit the care of them. While we retain these simple democracies in all our towns, which are the basis of our State Constitutions, and make a good use of them, it appears to me we cannot be enslaved or materially injured. It must, however, be confessed that imperfection unavoidably attends all human affairs.

'I am, sir, with great esteem, your obedient servant.'

APPENDIX VIII.

SKETCHES OF AMERICAN POLICY.

An account of *The Sketches*—in Webster's own hand—taken from a fly leaf of the original edition published by Hudson and Goodwin, Hartford: 'The following sketches were written

in the month of February, 1785, before any proposal had ever been made to new-model the government of the States. In May I carried one Copy of them to Virginia & presented it to Gen Washington. M^r. Madison saw & read it at the General's soon after, & in November the same year, he, in conversation with me, expressed a warm approbation of the sentiments it contains. At the next session of the Legislature, which indeed began the same month, a proposition was made[1] in the Assembly, for appointing the Commissioners, who afterward met at Annapolis & whose recommendation originated the Convention at Philad^a. in 1787. N. W.' [N.Y.P.L.]

APPENDIX IX.

REFORM OF ALPHABET.

To Benjamin Franklin. A.P.S.

'Thursday Evening—Phila^d.

'Mr. Webster presents his respects to his Excellency President[2] Franklin & begs him to peruse the enclosed papers & correct any mistakes in the principles. It is designed to collect some American pieces upon the discovery, history, wars, geography, economy, commerce, government &c. of this country & add them to the third part of the Institute, in order to call the minds of our youth from ancient fables & modern foreign events, & fix them upon objects immediately interesting, in this country. A Selection for this purpose should be judicious & the compiler feels his need of assistance in the undertaking. He will do himself the honor to call, in a few days, & take the advice of his Excellency, whose library may also be of service. The bearer will return the first volume of Elphinstone's Principles.'

[1] [Erased subsequently]; by M^r Madison or one of his friends.

[2] Then President of the Supreme Council of Pennsylvania, which was equivalent to the governorship.—[Ed.]

From BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. N.Y.P.L.

'Philad[a] July 9. 1786.

'SIR,

'I received your Favour of the 23 past. I think with you that your Lecturing on the Language will be of great use in preparing the Minds of People for the Improvements proposed, and therefore would not advise your omitting any of the Engagements you have made, for the sake of being here sooner than your business requires, that is in September or October next. I shall then be glad to see and confer with you on the Subject; being with great esteem,

'Sir.'

[Signature cut off.]

To BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. A.P.S.

'May 24[th] 1786

'DEAR SIR,

'When I was in Philadelphia, I had the honor of hearing your Excellency's opinion upon the idea of reforming the English alphabet. I had repeatedly revolved, in my mind, the utility of such a plan, and had arranged some ideas upon the subject, but had not ventured to hope for success in an undertaking of this kind. Your Excellency's sentiments upon the subject, backed by the concurring opinion of many respectable gentlemen, and particularly of the late chairman of Congress,[1] have taught me to believe the reformation of our Alphabet still practicable. I know that several attempts to effect it in England have proved fruitless; but I conceive they failed through some defect in the plans proposed, or for reasons that do not exist in this country.

'Enclosed is a plan for the purpose of redusing the orthography of the language to perfect regularity, with as few new characters and alterations of the old ones as possible.

'It is probable that a great number of new and unusual characters would defeat the attempt.

'I know not whether your Excellency will be able to understand the characters fully; for it is very difficult to convey sounds on paper, and particularly for me, who am no penman,

[1] Dr. Ramsay

and cannot form the characters exactly as I wish. But this rought draft will, perhaps, give a sufficient idea of my plan, and it is submitted to your Excellency for adoption, amendment, or rejection.

'I am requested to lay the plan before your Excellency, and by a gentleman whose character in public, and particularly in the chair of Congress, will give his opinion great weight in this country.

'Should this or any other plan be adopted, it is desired that your Excellency would lay it before Congress for their critical consideration. The advantages of adopting a reformation in this country, whether political or literary, will readily occur to an attentive mind, and it would be arrogant and superfluous for me to state them to one who is so accurately acquainted with the elements of language and the interest of America as your Excellency.

'General Washington has expressed the warmest wishes for the success of my undertaking to refine the language, and could he be acquainted with the new alphabet proposed, would undoubtedly commence its advocate.

'A few distinguished characters might give such weight to an attempt of this magnitude as to crush all the opposition that would be made by the enemies of our independence.

'The minds of the people are in a ferment, and consequently disposed to receive improvements,—once let the ferment subside, and the succeding lethargy will bar every great and rapid amendment. The favorable reception my lectures have generally met with, encourage me to hope that most of the Americans may be detached from an implicit adherence to the language and manners of the British nations.

'I have the honor to be, with the highest respect, your Excellency's

'Most obedient and humble servant.

'P.S.

'It would be esteemed a singular favor, if your Excellency would publicly recommend the Institute—it would facilitate its introduction, and confer a peculiar obligation on me.

'I must also beg permission to inscribe my lectures to your Excellency, when I publish them, as it is probable I may do within a few months.' [See Appendix XIII.]

From BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. N.Y.P.L.

'Philad[a]. June 18. 1786.

'SIR,

'I received the Letter you did me the honour of writing to me the 24th past, with the scheme enclos'd of your reform'd Alphabet. I think the Reformation not only necessary but practicable. But have so much to say to you on the Subject, that I wish to see and confer with you upon it, as that would save much Time and Writing. Sounds, till such an alphabet is fix'd, not being easily explain'd or discours'd of clearly upon Paper. I have formerly consider'd this Matter pretty fully, and contriv'd some of the means of carrying it into Execution, so as gradually to render the Reformation general. Our Ideas are so nearly similar, that I make no doubt of our easily agreeing on the Plan, and you may depend on the best Support I may be able to give it as a Part of your Institute, of which I wish you would bring with you a compleat Copy, having as yet seen only part of it: I shall then be better able to recommend it as you desire. Hoping to have soon the Pleasure of seeing you, I do not enlarge, but am, with sincere Esteem

'Sir,

'Your most obedient

'& most humble servant.'

To BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. A.P.S.

'New Haven June 23rd, 1786.

'SIR,

'The letter which your Excellency has done me the honor to address to me at New York was yesterday received at this place.

'I am happy that a plan of reforming our Alphabet is so well received by a gentleman who thoroughly understands the subject; and am more and more convinced from the present sentiments and spirits of the Americans, that a judicious attempt to introduce it needs but the support of a few eminent characters to be carried into effect.

'I feel the necessity of conferring with your Excellency on the subject, and would do myself the honor of waiting on you immediately, had I not made arrangement[s], or rather engagements, to read lectures in Boston and Portsmouth this summer.

Every circumstance with me renders this the most eligible plan; for the lectures have their effect in preparing the minds of people for any improvements, and my business will require me to be at Philadelphia in September or October. If this would answer your Excellency's wishes, it would be more convenient to me; otherwise I will come to Philadelphia immediately. I shall be in New Haven about ten days, and then proceed to Boston, unless I have further information.

'I have the honor to be your Excellency's

'much obliged and most humble servant.'

To BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. A.P.S.

'Hartford, (where I shall reside)
May 20th 1789

'SIR,

Enclosed, by request, is a letter from the Revd Abiel Holmes of Midway in Georgia, a Young Gentleman of peculiar modesty & great merit, whom I beg leave to introduce to your corresponding acquaintance. The request he makes is such as your Excellency will be pleased to comply with, if not too troublesome as Mr Holmes is in a situation where he is capable of being extensively useful.

'I have at length printed my Dissertation on the Language, a copy of which I shall desire my bookseller in Phild to deliver to your Excellency, as soon as they arrive.

'With ardent wishes for the life & health of so valuable a character,

'I am, your Excellency's most obliged

'& most obedient Servant.'

APPENDIX X.

ACCOUNT OF THE CONVENTION.

On the fly leaf of Webster's own copy is this brief subsequent comment, 'This is a hasty production written at the request of Mr. Fitzsimons, a member of the Convention, N.W.' [N.Y.P.L.]

We give one extract from the pamphlet:

'In what then does real power consist? The answer is short and plain, in property. Could we want any proofs of this which are not exhibited in this country, the uniform testimony of history will furnish us with multitudes.' Accordingly he adduces facts from the history of Rome, and from that of England, 'showing that the power of the people has increased in exact proportion to their acquisition of property. Wherever we cast our eyes, we see this truth, that property is the basis of power, and this being established as a cardinal point, directs us to the means of preserving our freedom. Make laws, irrevocable laws in every State, destroying and barring entailments; leave real estates to revolve from hand to hand, as time and accident may direct; and no family influence can be acquired and established for a series of generations; no man can obtain dominion over a large territory, the laborious and saving who are generally the best citizens, will possess each his share of property and power and thus the balance of wealth and power will continue where it is, in the body of the people. A general and tolerably equal distribution of landed property is the whole basis of national freedom. The system of the great Montesquieu will ever be erroneous, till the words property or land in fee simple, are substituted for virtue, throughout his Spirit of Laws.'

APPENDIX XI.

THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE. INTRODUCTION.

DECEMBER, 1787.

'The Editor of the *American Magazine* presents his compliments of the season to all his readers, and wishes them all the blessings they wish for themselves. He begs leave, on the auspicious opening of 1788, to usher into the world a *New Publication* which he designs to continue, as long as it shall be profitable to himself or entertaining to his countrymen. He thinks it unnecessary to trouble his readers with an enumeration of the *benevolent motives* which prompted him to this undertaking; for whatever he may say in his own favor, mankind will still have their own opinions of the Editor's views.

'To this he has not a single objection, while he is conscious

among several motives which actuate him on this occasion, there is not a bad one.

'The plan of this work is comprehensive, and great pains will be taken to render it in the execution both useful and amusing.

'The Editor is determined to collect as many original essays as possible; and particularly such as relate to this country, and contain useful and curious discoveries in the history or geography of America, or ingenious remarks upon the science of government, and the peculiar institutions and customs of the people in the different States. For these purposes the Editor has furnished himself with many materials, and he will acknowledge himself indebted for valuable communications both from Societies and individuals.

'The most interesting essays upon every subject, will be extracted from the latest periodical publications, both in Great Britain and France, and from time to time, an abridgment of the English Reviews of new and useful publications will be inserted.

'It is the Editor's wish to gratify every class of readers—the divine, the historian, the philosopher, the statesman, the moralist, the poet, the merchant and the laborer—and his *fair readers* may be assured, that no inconsiderable pains will be taken to furnish them with entertainment; at the same time he flatters himself, that many of the ladies who are the favorites of Minerva and the Muses, will be found in the number of his correspondents.

'The *American Magazine* will be open for every species of decent and valuable Essays; for fair discussion, general satire and wit and humor and for the production of imagination. At the same time the Editor will find it necessary to reserve to himself the right of deciding on the merit of the Essays communicated, and the propriety of admitting them into the work; as personal invective, ribaldry and immoral writings will form no part of the proposed selection.

'The Editor is sensible of the arduous task, he has imposed upon himself, in attempting to please the various tastes of his readers, and render the publication worthy of encouragement. But he is determined to devote more attention to the work than is usual in such publications; and that if it should fail of success, it shall be for some cause which it is not in *his* power to remove. The bulk of readers who are judges and give reputation to any

performance are generally candid. *Small faults* will never condemn a work that is substantially good; and if *great faults* should be found in the *American Magazine*; the Editor will freely consent to discontinue the publication.

'In this new world, a thousand subjects present themselves for discussion, which in Europe, are almost exhausted. Our predilection for foreign productions, among other causes, has operated to discourage undertakings of this kind; but while we allow foreign publications all their merit, it must be conceded that none of them can be wholly calculated for this country. Every periodical publication in Europe, consists of matter; more than half of which must be wholly uninteresting.

'In a country where people generally read and where their governments require them to be well informed, Magazines must be well received, if well conducted. New York, for its situation and other advantages, is the most eligible place for a publication of this kind; and it is presumed, that from its relative importance in the United States, its citizens will be among the first to cherish the attempt.

'New York. Jan. 1st. 1788.'

APPENDIX XII.

EXCERPTS FROM WEBSTER'S ACCOUNT OF THE PROCESSION.[1]

'A Band of Music.

'Tailors.

'A flag, ten by eleven feet, field sky blue, a fine landscape. Adam and Eve represented naked, excepting fig leaves for aprons nearly in full stature, in a sitting posture; motto, "And they sewed fig leaves together;" the United States forming a chain or links, upon a large circle, in order as they adopted the constitution, and the names of each state in the middle; in the centre of the circle, "Majority." The sun beaming forth its rays upon those states that have acceeded to federal measures. Rhode Island in

[1] Printed in a pamphlet, entitled: *Interesting Documents*, 1819. See *Bibliography* below.—[Ed.]

mourning. General Washington nearly in full stature, holding a parchment in his hand, with this inscription, 'The federal constitution.' The federal eagle, with its wings expanded, soaring towards the sun: the whole hung in a large frame, with golden knobs at the tops of the poles; carried by two standard bearers, and supported by two men, one upon each side of the flag, with fine blue and white cord, and elegant tassels in their hands.' * * *

'SECOND DIVISION.

* * *

'TANNERS & CURRIERS.

'Arms on the flag: Azure, a flesher, and a currying-knife; or crest, a bull's, head horned; or, supporters, on the dexter side, a Tanner in his frock and trousers, holding in his dexter hand a Tanner's skimmer, proper; on the sinister, a Currier in his working dress, apron turned up, holding in his sinister hand a currying-knife, proper; a sun rising from beneath the union flag, Motto, "By union we rise to splendor." Behind all, an oak tree.

'SKINNERS, BREECHES MAKERS & GLOVERS.

'Headed by Messrs. Alsop Hunt, Benjamin Gatfield, James Mathers, Leonard Rogers, and James Hays; a flag of cream coloured silk, borne by James Mott and John Peal, supported by Henry Frederic and Jacob Grindlemeyer; coat of arms, a pair of breeches and three gloves, supported by two rampant bucks; crest, a buck's head; a green field, with a ewe and two lambs, one lying down, the other standing. Motto, 'Americans, encourage your own manufactures'; followed by thirty-one of the trade, in buckskin waistcoats, faced with blue silk, breeches, gloves, and stockings, with a buck's tail in their hats. To these, Mr. W. Thompson, the parchment manufacturer, attached himself, with a standard of parchment, and the inscription, "American manufactured."

* * *

'THIRD DIVISION.

'CORDWAINERS.

* * * 'A stage, drawn by four white horses, with two postilions in livery; a shop on the stage, with ten men diligently prose-

cuting their business, emblematical of ten states that have adopted the constitution, with colours extended over the whole length of the shop, representing, in front, his Excellency General Washington coming out of the state house at Philadelphia, and presenting the constitution to Fame; she receiving it standing in her Temple, and ready to proclaim it to an astonished world! On the reverse, a full view of our own harbour, with the arrival of a ship with Crispin, who is joyfully received by St. Tammany. ***

* * *

'FURRIERS.

***'A red flag, on which a tyger, as large as life, was displayed, and above it a large muff of real ermine, as an emblem of the craft; followed by two journeymen in like habits as the first. In the rear of these, came Mr. Lyon Jonas, dressed in a superb scarlet blanket, and an elegant cap, ornamented with a beautiful plumage, smoking the Indian pipe and tomahawk. ***

'FIFTH DIVISION.

'CONFECTIONERS.

'Bacchus's cup, made of sugar, richly ornamented, four feet six inches in circumference; round the goblet's edge the inscription, "The Federal Confectioners," the letters of different colours; sugar-plumbs in the cup; the federal cake, ornamented with preserved fruit, made and carried by Mr. Pryor.

* * *

'UPHOLSTERERS.

***'On the right stood a comely lad,[1] in the character of Liberty, suitably dressed, and bearing her staff and cap, with a roll of parchment, inscribed, "Federal Constitution, 1788." On the left, another, in the character of justice, carrying the sword and balance. On the back of the chair were seen two angels elevating a laurel wreath, with this motto, "The reward of virtue," and on its top stood the bird sacred to Minerva. On the highest part of this beautiful canopy stood the American eagle, with expanded wings, supported by a globe representing the United

[1] John De Grushe.

States ; a variety of other emblematical circumstances might be noted, such as two watchful tygers, in a recumbent posture, intimating the necessary union of strength and prudence. On the front of the stage, a banner, representing Fame in a flying posture, carrying the constitution, was supported by one in the habit of a native American, but richly decorated with feathers, plumes, &c. The motto, "May the Federal Constitution be supported by Liberty and Justice."[1]

* * *

'SIXTH DIVISION.

* * *

'THE BLOCK AND PUMP MAKERS.

***'Finished a pump, turned three dozen sheaves and pins made thirteen blocks, sheaved and pinned complete, on the stage during the procession. A flag, with thirteen different kinds of blocks painted in an oval form, a pump boring in the centre. Motto, "May our industry ever recommend us to employment under the Federal Government."

'HORSE DOCTOR.

***'Walter Gibbons, horse-doctor, dressed in an elegant half shirt, with a painted horse on his breast, a balling iron in the horse's mouth, and the Doctor putting a ball of physic down his throat, with implements of farriery ready for use. Over the horse written, "Federal Horse Doctor." At the bottom, "Physic." On his back a horse skeleton, the doctor examining the head ; over his head, "Federal Horse Doctor," at bottom, "Dissection."

* * *

'TENTH DIVISION.

'PHYSICIANS, STRANGERS AND GENTLEMEN.
'PORTERS.

'ARTILLERY AND FIELD PIECE.

***'The line of procession, containing nearly five thousand people, extended upwards of a mile and a half. The march was

[1] Prepared by William Mooney, Upholsterer.

slow and majestic, and the general appearance of the scene as far surpassed every one's expectation, as mere description must fall short of it. While numberless crowds were pressing on every side, the doors and windows of houses were thronged by the fair daughters of Columbia, whose animated smiles and satisfaction contributed not a little to complete the general joy. * * *'

On July 22d the following notice appeared in the *Daily Advertiser* of New York:

FEDERAL PROCESSION.

'A report having been circulated that the procession would be postponed, the Committee of Arrangements gives notice that it will positively take place, agreeable to advertisement, tomorrow, the 23d instant. The inhabitants of Broadway, Whitehall Street, Great Dock Street, Hanover Square, and Queen Streets are requested to sweep and water their respective streets this evening and early to-morrow morning for the accommodation of the Federal procession.

'RICHARD PLATT,
'Chairman of the Committee of Arrangements.'

[ORDER OF THE PROCESSION.]

'Down Broadway [from "The Fields"] to Great Dock [now Pearl] Street; thence through Hanover Square, Queen [Pearl] Chatham, Division, and Aurundle [now Clinton] Streets; and thence through Bullock [now Broome] Street to Bayard's house.

APPENDIX XIII

DEDICATION TO BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

'Dedications are usually designed to flatter the Great, to acknowledge their services, or court their favor and influence. But very different motives have led me to prefix the venerable name of Franklin to this publication.

'Respect for his Excellency's talents and exertions, as a great Philosopher and a warm Patriot, I feel in common with all the lovers of science and freedom, but my peculiar admiration of his character, arises from considering it as *great* in *common things.*

'His Excellency has not labored to perplex himself and confound his countrymen with ingenious theories in ethics, and unintelligible speculations in theology and metaphysics. He has not compiled volumes to prove or disprove the probability of universal salvation, or the eternal duration of future punishments; content with a plain doctrine, taught by philosophy and common sense, and confirmed by christianity, that virtue and happiness, vice and punishment, are inseparably connected, and that if "we do well here, we shall fare well hereafter." In the most elevated stations of life, his Excellency has never been above a constant application to some useful business; thus complying with that precept of the fourth command '*six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work*,' which is as positive an injunction, and as binding upon all men, as the first article, "*remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*"

'In his philosophical researches, he has been guided by experiment, and sought for *practical truths.* In the world, he has been industrious to collect *facts* (which compose all our knowledge) and apply them to the most useful purposes of government, agriculture, commerce, manufactures, rural, domestic and moral economy. In communicating his ideas he does not sacrifice truth to embellishment. His stile is plain and elegantly neat; and his remarks are not so general as to leave his ideas indefinite and obscure. His pen follows his thoughts, and consequently leads the reader, without study, into the same train of thinking. In short, he writes for the child as well as the philosopher, and always writes well, because he never takes pains to write.

'Violently attached to no political party, he labors to reconcile contending factions in government. Convinced, by the experience of a long life, that all men are liable to err, and acknowledging "that he has often found himself mistaken, and had occasion to change his opinions," he consents to measures which his judgement tells him are *theoretically wrong*, when the voices of a majority declare them to be *practically right.*' * * *

From BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. N.Y.P.L.[1]

'DEAR SIR; 'Philad[a]., December 26th 1789.

'I received some time since your "Dissertations on the English Language." The Book was not accompanied by any Letter or Message, informing me to whom I am obliged for it; but I suppose it is to yourself.[2] It is an excellent Work, and will be greatly useful in turning the Thoughts of our Country men to correct Writing. Please to accept my Thanks for it as well as for the great Honor you have done me, in its Dedication. I ought to have made this Acknowledgment sooner, but much Indisposition prevented me.

'I cannot but applaud your Zeal for preserving the Purity of our Language, both in its Expressions and Pronunciation, and in corecting the popular Errors several of our States are continually falling into with respect to both. Give me leave to mention some of them, tho' possibly they may already have occurr'd to you. I wish however that in some future Publication of yours, you would set a discountenancing Mark upon them. The first I remember is the Word *improved*. When I left New-England, in the Year 23, this Word had never been used among us, as far as I know, but in the sense of *ameliorated* or *made better*; except once in a very old Book of D[r] Mather's entitled, *Remarkable Providences*. As that eminent Man wrote a very obscure Hand, I remember that when I read that Word in his Book, used instead of the Word *imployed*, I conjectured it was an Error of the Printer, who had mistaken a too short *l* in the Writing for an *r* and a *y* with too short a Tail for a *v*, whereby *imployed* was converted into *improved*; but when I returned to Boston, in 1733, I found this Change had obtained Favor, and was then become common; for I met with it often in perusing the Newspapers, where it frequently made an Appearance rather ridiculous: Such, for Instance, as the Advertisement of a Country-House to be sold, which had been for many Years *improved* as a Tavern; and, in the Character of a deceased Country-Gentleman, that he had been for more than 30 Years *improved* as a Justice-of-Peace. This Use of the Word *improved* is peculiar to New-England, and not to be met with among any other Speakers of English, either on this or the other Side of the Water.

[1] From the original, which is also printed in *The Life of Benjamin Franklin*, John Bigelow, x. p. 175.—[Ed.]

[2] See p. 456 *ante*.—[Ed.]

'During my late Absence in France, I find that several other new Words have been introduced into our parliamentary Language; for Example, I find a Verb formed from the Substantive *notice*, *I should not have* NOTICED *this*, *were it not that the Gentleman*, &c. Also another Verb, from the Substantive, *Advocate*, *The Gentleman who* ADVOCATES, *or who has* ADVOCATED *that Motion*, &c. Another from the Substantive *Progress*, the most awkward and abominable of the three, *The Committee having* PROGRESSED, *resolved to adjourn*. The Word *opposed*, tho' not a new Word, I find used in a new Manner; as *The Gentlemen who are* OPPOSED *to this Measure*, *to which I have also myself always been* OPPOSED. If you should happen to be of my Opinion with respect to these Innovations, you will use your Authority in reprobating them.

'The Latin Language, long the Vehicle used in distributing Knowledge among the different Nations of Europe, is daily more and more neglected; and one of the modern Tongues, viz the French, seems in Point of Universality to have supplied its Place; it is spoken in all the Courts of Europe, and most of the Literati, those even who do not speak it, have acquired Knowledge enough of it, to enable them easily to read the Books that are written in it. This gives a considerable Advantage to that Nation; it enables its Authors to inculcate and spread thro' other Nations such Sentiments and Opinions on important Points, as are most conducive to its Interests, or which may contribute to its Reputation by promoting the common Interests of Mankind. It is perhaps owing to its being written in French, that Voltaire's Treatise on Toleration has had so sudden and so great an Effect on the Bigotry of Europe, as almost entirely to disarm it. The general Use of the French Language has likewise a very advantageous Effect on the Profits of the Bookselling Branch of Commerce, it being well known, that the more Copies can be sold that are struck off from one Composition of Types, the Profits increase in a much greater Proportion than they do in making a greater Number of Pieces in any other kind of Manufacture. And at present there is no Capital Town in Europe without a French Bookseller's Shop corresponding with Paris.

'Our English bids fair to obtain the second Place. The great Body of excellent printed Sermons in our Language, and the Freedom of our Writings on political Subjects, have induced a Number of Divines of different Sects and Nations, as well as Gentlemen concerned in public Affairs, to study it, so far at least as to read it.

And if we were to endeavour the facilitating its Progress, the Study of our Tongue might become much more general. Those who have employed some Part of their Time in learning a new Language must have frequently observed, that while their Acquaintance with it was imperfect, Difficulties, small in themselves operated as great ones in obstructing their Progress. A Book, for Example, ill printed, or a Pronunciation in speaking, not well articulated, would render a Sentence unintelligible, which from a clear Print or a distinct Speaker, would have been immediately comprehended. If therefore we would have the Benefit of seeing our Language more generally known among Mankind, we should endeavour to remove all those Difficulties, however small, that discourage the learning it. But I am sorry to observe, that, of late Years, those Difficulties, instead of being diminished, have been augmented. In examining the English Books that were printed between the Restoration and the Accession of George the 2d, we may observe, that all Substantives were begun with a Capital, in which we imitated our Mother Tongue, the German. This was more particularly useful to those who were not well acquainted with the English, there being such a prodigious Number of our Words that are both Verbs & Substantives, and spelt in the same Manner, tho' often accented differently in Pronunciation. This Method has, by the Fancy of Printers, of late Years, been laid aside; from an Idea, that suppressing the Capitals shows the Character to greater Advantage; those Letters prominent above the Line, disturbing its even, regular Appearance. The Effect of this Change is so considerable that a learned Man of France, who used to read our Books, tho' not perfectly acquainted with our Language, in Conversation with me on the Subject of our Authors, attributed the greater Obscurity he found in our modern Books, compared with those of the Period above mentioned, to Change of Style for the worse, in our Writers; of which Mistake I convinced him by marking for him each Substantive with a Capital, in a Paragraph, which he then easily understood, tho' before he could not comprehend it. This shows the Inconvenience of that pretended Improvement.

'From the same Fondness for an even and uniform Appearance of Characters in the Line the Printers have of late banished also the Italic types, in which Words of Importance to be attended to in the Sense of the Sentence, and Words on which an Emphasis

should be put in Reading, used to be printed. And lately another Fancy has induced some Printers to use the short round *s*, instead of the long one, which formerly served well to distinguish a Word readily by its varied Appearance. Certainly the omitting this prominent Letter makes the Line appear more even, but renders it less immediately legible; as the paring all Men's Noses might smoothe & level their Faces, but would render their Physiognomies less distinguishable. Add to all these Improvements backwards, another modern Fancy, that *grey* Printing is more beautiful than *black*; hence the English new Books are printed in so dim a Character as to be read with Difficulty by old Eyes, unless in a very strong Light and with good Glasses. Whoever compares a Volume of the Gentleman's Magazine, printed between the Years 1731 & 1740 with one of those printed in the last 10 Years, will be convinced of the much greater Degree of Perspicuity given by black Ink than by grey. Lord Chesterfield pleasantly remarked this Difference to Faulkener, the Printer of the Dublin Journal, who was vainly making Encomiums on his own Paper, as the most complete of any in the World; "but, M^r^ Faulkener," says My Lord, "don't you think it might be still farther improved by using Paper and Ink not quite so near of a Colour?" For all these Reasons I cannot but wish, that our American Printers would in their Editions avoid these fancied Improvements, and thereby render their Works more agreeable to Foreigners in Europe, to the great Advantage of our Bookselling Commerce.

'Farther to be more sensible of the Advantage of clear and distinct Printing, let us consider the Assistance it affords in Reading well aloud to an Auditory. In so doing the Eye generally slides forward three or four Words before the Voice. If the Sight clearly distinguishes what the coming Words are, it gives time to order the Modulation of the Voice to express them properly. But if they are obscurely printed, or disguised by omitting the Capitals & long *s*'s, or otherwise, the Reader is apt to modulate wrong, and, finding he has done so, he is obliged to go back and begin the Sentence again; which lessens the Pleasure of the Hearers. This leads me to mention an old Error in our Mode of Printing. We are sensible that, when a Question is met with in Reading, there is a proper Variation to be used in the Management of the Voice. We have therefore a Point, called an interrogation, affix'd to the Question in order to distinguish it. But

this is absurdly placed at its End, so that the Reader does not discover it, till he finds he has wrongly modulated his Voice, and is therefore obliged to begin again the Sentence. To prevent this, the Spanish Printers, more sensibly, place an Interrogation at the Beginning as well as at the End of a Question. We have another Error of the same kind in printing Plays, where Something often occurs that is marked as spoken *aside*. But the Word *aside* is placed at the End of the Speech, when it ought to precede it, as a Direction to the Reader, that he may govern his Voice accordingly. The Practice of our Ladies in meeting five or six together to form little busy parties, where each is employed in some useful Work, while one reads to them, is so commendable in itself, that it deserves the Attention of Authors and Printers to make it as pleasing as possible, both to the Reader and Hearers.

'After these general Observations, permit me to make one that I imagine may regard your Interest. It is that your Spelling Book is miserably printed here, so as in many Places to be scarcely legible, and on wretched Paper. If this is not attended to, and the new one Lately advertised as coming out should be preferable in these Respects, it may hurt the future Sale of your's.

'I congratulate you on your Marriage, of which the Newspapers inform me. My best Wishes attend you, being, with sincere Esteem,

Sir, etc.'

The correspondence of Dr. Franklin and Webster is summed up in the note prefixed to the preface of the Dictionary (of 1806, p. vi.).

'In the year 1786, Dr. Franklin proposed to me to prosecute his scheme of a Reformed Alphabet, and offered me his types for the purpose. I declined accepting his offer, on a full conviction of the utter impracticability, as well as inutility of the scheme. The orthography of our language might be rendered sufficiently regular, without a single new character, by means of a few trifling alterations of the present characters, and retrenching a few superfluous letters, the most of which are corruptions of the original words.'

APPENDIX XIV.

STEPHEN GREENLEAF.

'May 18, 1695.—He files a petition for relief, and presents the bill for professional services of Dr. Humphrey Bradstreet, which reads, "Bill for curing Capt. Stephen Greenleaf, who was wounded while moving a family who had been taken from Newbury by the Indians £12-6-9."

'March 1, 1696.—The town granted to Stephen Greenleaf four or five rods on the flats, from Watt's cellar spring to Ensign Greenleaf's and Mr. Davidson's grant, from high-water mark to low-water mark, to build a wharf and a place to build vessels upon on certain conditions; one was that it come not within ten or twelve feet of the spring. On the 5th of March, 1696, Captain Greenleaf addressed the following petition to the General Court: "The petition of Capt. Greenleaf, of Newbury, Humbly Showeth: That upon the Seventh of October last, about three o'clock in the afternoon, a party of Indians surprised a family at Turkey Hill in said town, captured nine persons, women and children, rifled the house, carrying away bedding and dry goods. Only one person escaped, and gave notice to the next family, and they the town; upon the alarm your petitioner with a party of men pursued after the enemy, endeavoring to line the river Merrimac to prevent their passage, by which means the captives were recovered and brought back. The enemy lay in a gully hard by the roadway, and about nine at night made a shot at your petitioner, and shot him through the wrist, between the bones, and also made a large wound in his side, which would have been very painful and costly to your petitioner in the cure of them, and have in a great measure utterly taken away the use of his left hand, and wholly taken off from his employment this winter. Your petitioner therefore honorably prays this honorable court that they would make him such compensation as shall seem fit; which he shall thankfully acknowledge, and doubts not but will be an encouragement to others, and possibly to relieve their neighbors when assaulted by so barbarous an enemy. And your petitioner shall ever pray. (Signed) Stephen Greenleaf."

'March 6.—Read and voted that there be paid out of the province treasury to the petitioner the sum of forty pounds.'

*** 'The whole number of his descendants which were born between 1652 and 1728 was 1582, of which 1128 were living in May, 1728.' *Greenleaf Genealogy*, J. E. Greenleaf, p. 80.

APPENDIX XV.

DANIEL GOOKIN.

'If the labors of John Eliot of Roxbury entitled him to be regarded as an "Apostle" or as standing in the place of Aaron as a high-priest to them in spiritual things, with equal propriety may Daniel Gookin of Cambridge be regarded as their Moses —their civil instructor, ruler, judge and historian.' [*History of Cambridge*, Lucius R. Paige, p. 382.]

'About two years before this Revolution, Cambridge lost one of her most eminent citizens, Maj. Gen. Daniel Gookin, more familiarly known as Major Gookin. Sad and disheartened at the loss of the Old Charter, yet cheered by the consciousness that he had faithfully and earnestly labored for its preservation, he survived the catastrophe not quite a year. He found rest from his labors and deliverance from oppression, March 19, 1686-7, at the ripe age of 75 years; and a large horizontal slab marks the spot of his sepulture in the old burial-place. In his will, dated Aug. 13, 1685, he says,—"I desire no ostentation or much cost to be expended at my funeral, because it is a time of great tribulation, and my estate but little and weak." Hence it has been supposed that he was quite poor. On the contrary, while he was not rich, the number of houses, and the number of silver plate and other goods bequeathed by him, in his will, denote that his estate was at least equal to the average at that period. His character is described very tersely by Judge Sewall, in his Journal: "March 19, Satterday, about 5 or 6 in the morn, Major Daniel Gookin dies. A right good man.' *Ibid.* p. 109.

Josiah Quincy told Chief Justice Cranch 'that he was far prouder of the few drops of Gookin blood which came to him from the daughter of Daniel Gookin (the aunt of Elizabeth Gookin Greenleaf), than of any other strain that entered his veins.'

'As a specimen of the popular "clamors and animosity" [against the Indians], I copy a few manuscripts:—

"Elizabeth Belcher, aged 57, Martha Remington aged 31, and Mary Mitchell, aged 20, being sworne, doe say, that on y^e^ 28th day of Feb^r^. last, ab^t^ 10 of the clocke at night, Ri: Scott came into y^e^ house of y^e^ said Belcher, and suddenly after he came in broak out into many hideous raileing expressions ag^t^ y^e^ wor^ll^ Capt. Daniel Gookin, calling him an Irish dog y^t^ was never faithful to his country, the sonne of a whoare, a bitch, a rogue, God confound him, & God rott his soul, saying if I could meet him alone I would pistoll him. I wish my knife and sizers were in his heart. He is the devil's interpreter. I and two or three more designed to cut of all Gookin's brethren at the Island, but some English dog discovered it, the devil will plague him" etc.

'Sworn before Samuel Willard, Assistant. March 4, 1675-6.' *Ibid.* p. 394.

APPENDIX XVI.

JOHN BROWN.

'It is said by Governor Winthrop that during this year [1645] the government [of Plymouth Colony] sent Mr. John Brown one of the Magistrates, to Aquiday [Aquidneck, Rhode Island] to forbid M^r^ [Roger] Williams from exercising any authority there, and laying claim to the island.' *History of New Plymouth*, Francis Baylies, part ii. p. 9.

'That John Brown was a freeman of Plymouth earlier than 1635-6 is denied by Edson Salisbury Jones, who claims that the John Brown made freeman of Mass in 1634 was of *Watertown*.' From *Bond's History of Watertown*, in *Baylies' Historical Memoirs of Plymouth Colony*, ii. p. 201.

APPENDIX XVII.

JOHN BROWN.

'During this year [1662] the town was afflicted with the loss of one of its most influential inhabitants M^r^ John Brown. He

died April 10, 1662 at Wannamoiset. The following notice is made of him by Morton in his New England's Memorial (pp. 295, 296, 297). "This year Mr John Brown ended this life; in his younger years travelling into the low countries, he came acquainted with, and took good liking to, the reverend pastor of the church of Christ at Leyden, as also to sundry of the brethren of that church; which ancient amity induced him (upon his coming over to New-England) to seat himself in the jurisdiction of New Plimouth, in which he was chosen a magistrate; in which place he served God and the country several years; he was well accomplished with abilities to both civil and religious concernments, and attained, through God's grace, unto a comfortable perswasion of the love and favour of God to him; he, falling sick of a fever, with much serenity and spiritual comfort, fell asleep in the Lord, and was honourably buried at Wannamoiset near Rehoboth, in the spring of the year aforesaid." He was first elected to the office of assistant in Plymouth Colony in 1636, which office he ably filled for seventeen years. He was also one of the commissioners of the United Colonies of New England from 1644 to 1655. The mention of this latter fact may serve to show in what estimation he was held in the Colony, when we recollect that only two persons were chosen from each colony to that office. He was made a freeman of the colony of Plymouth in 1634. He was one of the original proprietors of the town, and owned large estates in land both at Rehoboth and Wannamoiset—Mr Brown was a friend to religious toleration, and was the first of the Plymouth magistrates who expressed scruples as to the expediency of coercing people to support the ministry. He was a man of talent, integrity and piety, and his death was deeply felt through the whole colony. James Brown, who also was assistant in 1655 and lived at Swansea, was his son.' *History of Rehoboth*, Leonard N. Bliss, Jr., p. 75.

APPENDIX XVIII.

JAMES BROWN.

***'And then hastened away to Pocasset, where he [Benj. Church] met with Peter Minnuit, the husband of the Queen of

Pocasset. ***The same Peter[1] told him that he saw Mr. James Brown of Swanzey, and Mr. Samuel Gorton, who was an interpreter, and two other men, who brought a letter from the Governour of Plymouth to Philip. He observed to him further, that the young men were very eager to begin the war, and would fain have killed Mr. Brown, but Philip prevented it; telling them, that his father had charged him to shew kindness to Mr. Brown.' *Entertaining Passages Relating to Philip's War which began in the Year, 1675, With the Proceedings of Benj. Church, Esqr. History of King Philip's War*, edition of 1829, p. 20.

'On the 14th of June, at the urgent solicitation of Mr. James Brown of Swansey, (but formerly of Rehoboth) the Governour despached a letter to Philip filled with amicable professions and disclaiming all hostile intentions, but complaining of his movements, and advising him to dismiss all the strange Indians that had resorted to him, and to give no credit to the sinister reports made to him of the English. This letter he answered only with threats and menaces of war. Church relates that the Indians with Philip "would fain have killed Mr. Brown," who, with Mr. Samuel Gorton and two other men, bore the letter, "but Philip prevented it; telling them that his father had charged him to show kindness to Mr. Brown."' *Rehoboth*, Leonard N. Bliss, Jr., p. 75.

APPENDIX XIX.

JONATHAN B. BLACKBURN.

Blackburn was an artist of great promise, to whom Fenimore Cooper gave very high praise in the preface to one of his novels. His early death at thirty-two years of age blighted the hopes of his friends for his rising reputation. In *Art and Artists of Connecticut*, by H. W. French, there is this notice: ***'Much of his work is to-day highly valued for its intrinsic worth, even when compared with the accomplishments of art that have followed it. At least thirty portraits of Mr. Blackburn's paintings are owned in Boston, where he painted either with or directly

[1] 'This was an Indian named Petonowowet, or Pe-tan-a-nuct, which the English corrupted easily into Peter Minnuit.*** He was then styled Sachen Ben Petananuett.'

after Smybert and for sometime following (*i.e.*, from about 1745).' The portrait 'of Gov. Saltonstall's family (four of his children) arranged about a table, * * * is agreeable in design, and finely painted ; good in its tone and drawing ; and indeed quite remarkable throughout, considering the circumstances. The flesh-tints are neither crude, thin nor pale, but show a strong sense of the beauty of flesh ; while his draperies are striking for ease and grace of line and mass, his background admirable for strength and clearness. These criticisms will apply equally to the most of his work now known to the public. William H. Whitmore, in his *Notes on Peter Pelham*, says of Blackburn : " In his day, as an artist, he was second only to Copley."'

'The last artist on the list is J. B. Blackburn ; whose pictures, to a certain degree, Copley, in his early manner, imitated and surpassed. It would seem, from seeing the pictures of these painters side by side, that Copley must have studied with Blackburn. Both frequently used, either as the lining of a dress or a drapery, a certain shade of mauve pink. Blackburn uses this shade feebly, while Copley dashes it on with the hand of a master. Some of Blackburn's drapery is as good as Copley's particularly his white satins ; but many of his heads, especially those of women, are feeble. This is never so with Copley. He may be hard and angular, but he is almost always vigorous. The fine pictures of Joseph Allen and his wife, in the possession of Miss Andrews ; and of the Cunningham family, in the possession of Mrs. Porter, show conclusively how good an artist Blackburn was.' [*A Sketch of the Life of John Singleton Copley*, Augustus Thorndike Perkins, p. 8.]

'Mr. Perkins * * * gives a list of some fifty pictures by him which are still preserved, including a number of full lengths and two family groups, and surmises that he remained in Boston until his pupil or imitator, Copley, had begun to paint better than himself. Blackburn, however he may have got his training, was a respectable painter and might fairly rival Smybert or the youthful Copley. His portraits are rigid and the modelling dry, like those of his contemporaries, but they are serious work, and he sometimes shows a feeling for color in delicate grays and quiet tones which is entirely his own, and he was moreover, capable of composing a group fairly well.' *American Painting*, Samuel Isham, p. 18.

APPENDIX XX.

OFFICIAL DRESS.

In this connection we give the following passage:

'Dress was an indication of superiority, and was fashioned quite as much for display as for use. As late as 1795, it is mentioned by a visitor from New York that "the broad aisle of Brattle-Street Church was lined by gentlemen in wigs, with cocked hats and scarlet coats." Caps were often worn by gentlemen in the privacy of domestic life. Hancock is described as wearing "a red velvet cap, within which was one of fine linen." The blue damask dressing-gowns and embroidered waistcoats of the period are yet visible upon the canvas of Copley. As wigs were gradually laid aside, the hair was powdered and arranged with precision; and as this took more time and trouble, it served to mark even better the aristocracy of the wearer. Lace ruffles, silk stockings, polished shoes with buckles, (which being adapted to either foot, careful persons were accustomed to alternate), were essential to the correct dress of a gentleman. The business suit was of broadcloth, generally of a light shade. But on occasions of ceremony brocades and velvets of bright colors made the costumes of the gentlemen quite as various and picturesque as those of the ladies. Official personages did not always avoid pecularities of dress. Governor Bowdoin had appeared in red small-clothes, and Judge Dana wore in winter a white corduroy surtout, lined with fur; and he carried a large muff. Crimson cloaks, white-topped botts, and cocked hats gave that pleasing color to a walk about town which is now supplied by the shop-windows. The judges of the supreme court shone in robes of scarlet, trimmed with black velvet, and only during the oppressive heat of summer, exchanged this oppressive finery for the sombre dignity of gowns of black silk. At the funeral of Gov. Hancock, the court appeared for the last time in full dress. It has been said that the bearing of Judge Dawes, who was less than five feet in height, so detracted from the emblematic significance of the judicial trappings, that the chief-justice decided that the unadorned majesty of the law would thereafter be more imposing. But a better explanation may be found in the visits to Boston of the Federal judges Jay

and Iredell who were content to administer justice in robes of solemn black. The growing popularity of Gallic principles commended simplicity of dress to conspicuous functionaries of the State.' *Memorial History of Boston*, edited by Justin Winsor, vol. iv. chapter i. Social life in Boston, by Josiah P. Quincy.

APPENDIX XXI.

WEBSTER AS AN ABOLITIONIST.

From JAMES PEMBERTON. W. MSS.

'Philadelphia 27th 7th mo 1790

'RESPECTED FRIEND.

'Being a witness to the proofs thou hast given of thy attachment to the just rights of men, unconfined to nation or colour, I am induced to send thee by a favorable opportunity that offers a few late publications for the use of thyself and acquaintance on the infamous Slave trade, and the injustice of detaining in perpetual bondage the oppressed part of the human species, who are the subjects of it.

'Notwithstanding the virulent opposition given by a few interested members to the memorials on this important subject presented to the General Legislature at their present session, the advocates of the cause of justice and humanity are convinced it hath lost no part of its importance, and the dispassionate part of the community must judge the opponents to be convicted of the iniquity, when invective and railing supply the place of argument for their support, which gives encouragement to hope that a repetition of opportunity may be available to obtain from Congress what they have acknowledged to be in their power to manifest their abhorrence of the detestable topic, and the subject having been thus held up to public view has had an effect to turn the minds of the people at large to its more full investigation than on any former occasion.

'We have accounts from Baltimore that the Society instituted there for the gradual abolition of Slavery &c has greatly increased, consisting now of 200 members though only about ten months since it was first promoted. Similar associations are also forming in other parts of Maryland, and one is lately

brought into existence in Richmond in Virginia, the beneficial effects of which institutions for the relief of the oppressed have already been evident in various instances.

'The Pennsylvania Society has made a progress in bringing forward the execution of the plan, for the improvement of the free blacks in this city, which has obtained the full approbation of those people, and the most respectable among them unite their assistance for its promotion; one additional school is opened and we hope soon to have more established for the instruction of their youth of various ages, and of each sex.

'We have received favorable accounts from Paris and London of the progress of the endeavors of the friends of humanity for the suppression of the odious Slave trade, so that there is ground to hope, that through the blessing of Providence, that momentous object may in time be obtained

From thy Respectful friend,

SOCIETY FOR THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY.

'At a meeting of the Con^{t}. Soc^{y}. for the prom^{n}. of Freedom &c holden at Hartford on the 11th. of May 1791.

'Noted; That Noah Webster, Esq^{r}. the Rev^{d} Doc^{r} Edwards, Elisha Hyde, James Potter, Moses Cleaveland, Nathan Hale, Asher Miller, Sylvester Gilbert, be a com^{ee}. to nominate persons from their respective counties, to stand candidates for admission into this society, at the next stated meeting thereof—and that the Secretary be requested to transmit the names of such as are already members in county to the member of s^{d}. com^{ee}. from such county on or before the 1st Day of July next, and that s^{d} com^{ee} do not recommend any person till they are acquainted with his sentiments relative to the Institution of this Society.'

A true copy of record,

Ex^{d}

Simeon Baldwin, Sec$^{y.}$'

'A List of the Members of the Society then follows in Webster's hand. [W. MSS.]

Berlin - - - -	Benoni Upson
Berlin - - - -	Nathan Penn
Farmington - -	Rufus Hawley
	Col. Aaron Austin

Torrington - - -	Rev. Sam[el] J. Mills
Torrington - - -	William Battle
Hartford - - -	Chauncey Goodrich Esq.
	Enoch Perkins Esq.
	Revd. Nathan Strong
	Rev. Abel Flint
	Noah Webster Esq.
	John Trumbul Esq.
	Doct Lemuel Hopkins
	Revd. Nathan Perkins
Farmington - -	Rev. Allen Olcott
	Thomas Seymour Esq.
Windsor - - -	Hez[h]. Bissell Esq.
D°. - - -	Revd. Theodore Hinsdale
	Revd. John Smalley
	Roger Newbury Esq.

'Total Number.

'County of	H. - - -	20
	N. H. - - -	53.
	N. L. - - -	22
	L. - - -	20
	F. - - -	10
	M. - - -	8
	T. - - -	6
		153.' [*sic*]

This must have been one of the very first Abolition Societies formed.

'An Abolition Society was formed in New York in 1785, of which John Jay was president and Alexander Hamilton secretary. Similar societies were formed in Rhode Island and Connecticut in 1789 and 1790, in New Jersey in 1792, and others were also organized in Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. In the last-named state, however, in 1785, Washington wrote to Lafayette that "petitions for the abolition of slavery... could scarcely obtain a hearing."' *A Retrospect of Forty Years*, William Allen Butler, p. 68.

The following was written for publication, but was returned by the editor to *John L. Boswell, Hartford* (a *nom de plume* given by Webster). Postmarked Jan. 24, the year unknown, but presumably after 1820, it shows the change toward conservatism from Webster's earlier zeal for Abolition.—[Ed.]

'TO THE ABOLITIONISTS, SO CALLED.

'I have a few words to say to you ; & few only. I am opposed to your proceedings, not from a friendship for slavery, for I view it as a great moral & political evil, but because your proceedings, can not effect your object. You disturb society in the north while you advance not a step toward emancipation in the south.

'1. The first publications & measures of the abolitionists in the North were so violent & provoking, that they defeated the object, & they have rendered all your present & future efforts utter [*sic*] vain & hopeless.

'2. No man denies the *right* of discussion ; but a large portion of our citizens—& those of the first intelligence & respectability, deny the *expedience* of discussions in the *north*, on slavery in the *south*.

'3. One reason why discussion is objected to, is that it can not do any good. Another reason is that it is needless, for the subject is as well understood by people in general as it is by those who discuss it.

'4. Another reason why discussion of this subject is inexpedient, is, that it disturbs our citizens ; it disunites ministers & people ; it breaks up churches & congregations, or fills them with controversies.

'5. If you reply that this is wrong ; the citizens have no right to oppose discussion. Admitting this to be true, if the *fact* is so, that discussions have the injurious consequences above mentioned, it is the *moral* duty of abolitionists to desist from them. We in the *north* are not responsible for the slavery of the *south*. But we are *all responsible* for disturbing the peace of society *among ourselves*. If the prosecution of a *good* object among our own people tends to break up the harmony of society the goodness of the cause does not justify the means. And the practice is in direct contradiction of our Savior's commands to his disciples, when he sent them to proclaim the gospel. He directed them, in case men would not hear them, to shake off the dust of their feet & leave them. He did not authorize them to *persevere* in *preaching*, in *opposition to public sentiment* ; & doubtless for the reasons that such preaching would do no good, & would endanger them or the public peace.

'I therefore believe that the abolitionists, in the pursuit of their

object here in the north, are guilty of violating both *christian* & *political* duty.

'*John*'

Endorsed in pencil in Webster's handwriting 'Mr. Boswell please to print the foregoing & send paper to N. Webster.'

In Boswell's handwriting: 'Remailed to N. Webster Feb. 2.' [W. MSS.]

APPENDIX XXII.

FROM WEBSTER'S ANONYMOUS PREFACE TO WINTHROP'S JOURNAL.

'This Manuscript, as appears by some passages, was originally designed for publication; and it was formerly consulted by the first compilers of New-England History, particularly by Hubbard, Mather and Prince. But it continued, unpublished and uncopied, in possession of the elder branch of the family, till the late revolution, when Governor Trumbull of Connecticut procured it, and, with the assistance of his Secretary, copied a considerable part of it. Soon after the Governor's death, a gentleman, who has a taste for examining curious original papers, which respect his own country, came, by accident, to a knowledge of this manuscript; and with consent of the Governor's heirs, contracted for a copy merely for his own improvement and amusement. On reading the work, he found it to contain many curious and interesting facts, relating to the settlement of Massachusetts, and the other New-England colonies, and highly descriptive of the character and views of the first inhabitants. This suggested to him the design of publishing the journal *complete*; as any abridgement of it would tend to weaken its historical evidence, and put [it] in the power of captious critics to impeach its authenticity. By consent of the descendants of Gov. Winthrop, proposals were issued for publishing a small number of copies; and the design is at length accomplished.'

From THOMAS L. WINTHROP.[1]

'Boston May 13. 1788.

'DEAR SIR

'Your esteemed favor of the 4. Instant, I had the pleasure to receive. I most sincerely wish you success in Publishing Governor Winthrop's Journal, and coming from your Hands, I doubt not it will be correct. My brother, M^r. Francis B. Winthrop will shortly be at New-York, he has in his possession all the Papers belonging to the family, he probably may Communicate some that may be worthy your Attention.'***

Early in the spring of 1816 (twenty-six years after Webster had edited the first publication) there was discovered in the tower of the Old South Church in Boston, a third part of the manuscript of John Winthrop. 'The difficulty of transcribing it seemed to appal several of the most competent members' [of the Massachusetts Historical Society]. Mr. Savage himself, however, undertook the copying and the laborious comparing of the different manuscripts, and he improved greatly in accuracy upon his predecessor.

But there seemed no reason for his taking this occasion to condemn the labors of Webster, who would only rejoice to see his work supplemented and corrected. He makes Webster personally responsible for the mistakes in the text, which he employed a skilful copyist to transcribe. Instead of acknowledging the great help he must have derived from Mr Porter's copy which this reviewer says: 'unquestionably saved him some months of labor,' he mentions it but to slight Webster's share in the publication. 'Knowing as we do what time it costs to learn the chirography of Winthrop, and assuming that Mr. Porter was not a critic in our early history we cannot but marvel that he made a transcript of Winthrop as good as he did. ***[2]

[1] Inserted in a copy of the *Journal*, which contains Webster's MS. Notes, N.Y.P.L.—[Ed.]

[2] A review of Savage's second edition of Winthrop, by Samuel G. Drake, printed in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, October, 1853, and January, 1854. The writer takes the position that Savage did not give due acknowledgement of his indebtedness to Webster and Porter, pioneers in the issue of the History, and with justice criticises this piece of injustice.

Notwithstanding Mr. Savage copied Mr. Webster's introductory matter in his first edition of Winthrop, including Mr. Porter's letter to Mr. Webster, he held the latter responsible for all the mistakes he could discover in the first edition; often treating his labors in that edition *** as old schoolmasters used to treat those scholars they were pleased to denominate *dunces*.

Webster paid (for those days) liberally for the copy of Winthrop and 'was the means of its being printed and published; and it was owing to that circumstance, beyond question, that we of this age are favored not only with "Winthrop's Journal," but with "Winthrop's History of New England," also.'[1]

'In bestowing the praise on the present edition, Mr. Savage's, we would not be understood to speak lightly of the industry or accuracy of the former editor. It requires only a glance at the facsimilie at the end of the present work, or at a few of the earliest pages of the Town Records of Boston to satisfy us of the extreme difficulty of reading the handwriting of Gov. Winthrop and his contemporaries. To those who inspect it for the first time, it will seem less surprising that numerous errors should have been committed by the first editor, or that he should have given up many words.'[2]

From JEREMY BELKNAP.[3]

'Boston Dec^{r} 26 1795

'DEAR SIR

'Your favour of Nov 24 came to hand 2 days ago. In the name of the Society I desire you to accept their thanks for the papers sent by Cap^{t} Bernard. I have sent to the Post Office to day but do not find that any have come in that channel since the date of your Letter.

'Our stock of materials for a history of this Country is much increased, but our income is so little that we are not able to "do the things which we would" for the public benefits. Our President Judge Sullivan has given us 200 Dollars which he received of the Printer for the Copy-right of his history of

[1] *Ibid.*

[2] Reference not found.—[Ed.]

[3] Inserted in a copy of the *Journal*. N.Y.P.L.—[Ed.]

Maine, this donation has helped us to pay for the finishing of our Chamber. Perhaps it may be in your Power to help us in something of a similar way.

'By the favour of Gov^r^ Trumbull's family we have become possessed of a great number of Manuscripts & among others of the *original* & a M S Copy of Gov^r^ Winthrop's Journal. I know not whether you obtained a Copy-right to that which you published; but if you will give your Consent, & the descendants of Gov^r^ Winthrop make no objection I suppose the Society may be considered as the Proprietors of that work & that we may make an advantageous bargain with some Printer for another Edition.

'I have not made mention of this matter to any other Person being desirous of first hearing from you on the Subject. You will much oblige me by letting me know your mind as soon as you can.

'Y^r^ most obed^t^ Serv^t^'

APPENDIX XXIII.

DOCTOR MITCHILL.

'There was a rare union in Dr. Mitchill of a mind of vast and multifarious knowledge and of poetic imagery. Even in his "Epistles to his Lady Love," the excellent lady who became his endeared wife, he gave utterance of his emotions in tuneful numbers, and likened his condition unto that of the dove, with trepidation seeking safety in the ark. Ancient and modern languages were unlocked to him, and a wide range in physical science, the pabulum of his intellectual repast. An essay on composts, a tractate on the deaf and dumb, verses to Septon or to the Indian tribes, might be eliminated from his mental alembic within the compass of a few hours. He was now engaged with the anatomy of the egg, and now deciphering a Babylonian brick; now involved in the nature of meteoric stones, now on the different species of brassica; now on the evaporation of fresh water, now on that of salt; now offering suggestions to Garnet, of New Jersey, the correspondent of Mark Akenside, on the angle of the windmill, and now concurring with Michaux on the beauty of the black walnut as

ornamental for parlor furniture. In the morning he might be found composing songs for the nursery, at noon dietetically experimenting and writing on fishes, or unfolding a new theory on terrene formations, and at evening addressing his fair readers on the healthy influences of the alkalis, and the depurative virtues of whitewashing. At his country retreat at Plandome he might find full employment in translating, for his mental diversion, Lancisi on the fens and marshes of Rome, or in rendering into English poetry the piscatory eclogues of Sannazarius. Yesterday, in workmanlike dress, he might have been engaged, with his friend Elihu H. Smith, on the natural history of the American elk, or perplexed as to the alimentary nature of tadpoles, on which, according to Noah Webster, the people of Vermont almost fattened during a season of scarcity; to-day, attired in the costume of a native of the Feegee Islands, (for presents were sent him from all quarters of the globe,) he was better accoutred for illustration, and for the reception, at his house, of a meeting of his philosophical acquaintance; while to-morrow, in the scholastic robes of an LL.D., he would grace the exercises of a college commencement.' *Old New York*, John W. Francis, p. 90.

APPENDIX XXIV.

PRIESTLEY LETTERS.[1]

From JOSEPH PRIESTLEY. W. MSS.

'Northumberland March 20. 1800.
[Penn.]

***'Whatever you may imagine to the contrary, I forbore writing on the subject of your Politics till I had suffered more than you suppose from the gross [abuse?] of Porcupine, whose News paper, and other publications, were read by the most respectable people in this neighborhood.

'Finding it necessary to write in my own defence, I chose to do it fully, never having any objections to any person knowing what I think on any subject, and I hoped I had done it in such a manner as not to give any offence.

[1] Reference omitted through an error on p. 496, Vol. I.—[Ed.]

'In some things you have strangely misrepresented me. I declared my preference of the constitution of this country to that of France, and my approbation of what had been done for the defence of the country, and the coasts of it, against all invaders; and you will find in my letters allusions to moré enemies than Porcupine, some in this neighborhood, native Americans.

'Tho you think me a dangerous person, and that if I continue to write as I have done, it would be right to send me out of the country, I am not deterred from writing by that consideration; but because I have done what I deem sufficient in that way, and have other objects. I like the country and its constitution, and only fear the violation, or perversion [*torn*] such as has taken place with respect to that of England.

'Whatever you think of me, I feel no unfriendly disposition towards you, and yet am,

'Your sincere well wisher,'

From JOSEPH PRIESTLEY. W. MSS.

'Northumberland, May 8, 1800.

'SIR

'I do not wish to continue our correspondence on the subject of *Politicks*; but I must say that I am as confident as I can be of any thing, that those who think differently from you, have not the views that you ascribe to them, viz, "the complete overthrow of the constitution." In this I do not see that [they] can have any interest. They only wish to have it administered according to genuine principles.

'On the other hand, the friends of administration appear to me to lean towards a *monarchical government*, which I am glad to see you reprobate. The most zealous and the most intelligent Federalist in this place avows to me his preference of it. Mr. Adams, I believe, makes no secret of his having the same opinion, and I am inclined to think it will be a prevailing one, and especially from what has taken place in France, which has made the English more attached to monarchy than ever. From what quarter, then, is danger to the constitution of this country most naturally to be apprehended?

'Where *Politicks* are concerned, I expect no justice in any country, but I think there is some thing peculiarly hard in the

case of my friend, Mr. Cooper,[1] an open hearted honest man if there be one, and a sincere admirer of the American constitution. He was openly charged with a meanness of which he is utterly incapable. The President must have contributed to the accusation by the communication of his letter and more to himself. Being a man of spirit, he refutes the charge, perhaps with too much acrimony. However, he advanced nothing but what is notoriously true. But tho the law allows this to be an exculpation, the legal evidence of it is purposely withheld from him, and the President, whom no article of the Constitution forbids to give his aid to do justice to any individual, must not be subpoena'd in the case. In consequence of this he is convicted of sedition, by a Jury appointed by a member of the administration. What must the friends of liberty in any part of the world think of such a proceeding as this? If there be anything wrong in this statement, the publication of the trial will set me right.

'But having given my opinion with respect to your Politicks, I wish to have done with them. You say you wish to [know] my opinion on some subjects. I do not know that our studies have the same object, but if I can be of any use to you, I shall very chearfully do it. The English family you mention I esteem above most that I was ever acquainted with, and should think myself happy to have them as near to me as they are to you. I beg my best respects to them, and am,

'Sir,

'Yours sincerely,'

APPENDIX XXV.

THE DICTIONARY, 1806–1911.

We venture to insert the following verses to prove, if nothing else, that, given the wit, even a dictionary may be made a light and playful subject.—[Ed.]

[1] Thomas Cooper, a scholar and politician born in England, educated at Oxford, studied medicine and law, and joined the Girondist Clubs in France. He came to America and opposed the administration of John Adams, while a lawyer in Pennsylvania, and for a libel on him was sentenced to imprisonment for six months and a fine of $400. Afterwards professor of

'To the late Noah Webster,' by Owen Seaman in *Punch*, [March 8, 1911] in reference to a new edition of the Dictionary:

This weighty structure—one stone one, or more—
Full as an egg of meat, and very showy,
Yea, packed with such a variegated store
As filled the hulk in which that other Noë,
With Shem and Ham, *et cetera*, made his mark
(That is to say, The Ark),

In wealth of illustrations fairly dims
The luminous past. Four hundred extra pages,
A trebled stock-in-trade of Synonyms,
And several new 'Fictitious Personages,'
Conspire to make the sort of wedding gift
No thief could hope to lift.

Webster, you should be here, right here, to-day,
Snatching an idle hour from realms of Fairy,
To mark your Eagle, strangely proud and gay,
Smile on your devastating Dictionary—
That fowl for which the earth supplies no mate
(See opening colored plate).

What if the firm of BELL of London (Eng.)
Upon the volume which I here review sets
Its *imprimatur*, sharing this great fling
With Messrs. MERRIAM of Massachusetts?
Initially, old man, the rightful praise
Is yours and U. S. A.'s.

And, though Columbia calls your teeming tome
'The International,' she don't repent her
Of fashions fixed in that New England home
That was your theater [sic], your working center;
Still where your 'Unabridged' began to sell
They own your ancient spell.

Chemistry in Dickinson College, and President of South Carolina College. See Lamb's *Biographical Dictionary of the English Language*.

Yet Time has changed a lot, omniscient Sir.
Some things that to our vulgar vision lie plain
Had never had occasion to occur
Within your knowledge—sample I., the Biplane;
In those far days they simply ran to kites,
The local WILBUR WRIGHTS.

The biograph, the motor-bus, the ski,
The tube, the tubal lift, the fleet Marconi,
Were still undreamed in your philosophy,
Contemporaneous with the tyrant BONEY;
And yet on these our daily souls are fed—
On these, and Standard Bread.

Microbes, again—you never heard the term.
The larger monsters, such as Megatherium,
Engaged a fancy still untaught to squirm
At lesser fauna like the slim Bacterium;
Nor yet did table-topics, ere you passed,
Include the Scleroblast.

Thus Science ruthlessly extends her range.
One lives and learns; let's hope one dies and learns too;
For I should loathe to think you cannot change,
That all in vain your cabined spirit yearns to
Pick up fresh wrinkles from the Book of Fame,
Noë, that bears your name.

APPENDIX XXVI.

REVIEWS OF THE DICTIONARY.

On April 11, 1806, Webster's Dictionary had been assigned to M[r] Buckminster for review. In July it was assigned to M[r] Shaw 'to write or procure to be written a review.' The matter appears to have rested until October, when John Pickering, of Salem, was asked to do it, but he declined, and it was given to Rev. Samuel Willard. Six months later the review was as near writing as ever, and James Savage offered to attempt it, and on October 10th [1809] it was read, 'of great length. To the first paragraph Mr. Buckminster objected stoutly, and Dr. Kirkland

feebly, but the majority seemed disinclined to reject it. After a slight alteration in one or two places, and striking out one paragraph, it was accepted.' See *Journal of the Proceedings of the Anthology Society*, N. A. DeWolfe Howe, pp. 199, 200, 207-8.—[Ed.]

'The monthly Anthology and Boston Review,' 'Edited by a Society of Gentlemen' was the vehicle of the most thoughtful literary ideas of the time.[1]

The reviewer complains that among the words 'stigmatized as obsolete are among many others thus unworthily traduced: *Degenerous*, *Degenerously*, *Depauperate*, *Deport*, * * * *Designment*, * * * *Discongruity*, * * * *Disobligation*, * * * which are often heard in polite conversation, or found in the most modern writers of our language.' He concludes with the following :

'We have marked with candour the most prominent faults in this work, and if it be asked why so little is said in commendation of it, we shall desire every one to compare it with Johnson. That some words of real value and importance are found in it, which are not in the standard Lexicon of our language, is readily admitted : but so many dangerous novelties are inserted, that no man can safely consult it without comparison with others. From the future labours of M^r^ Webster we expect some amusement and some advantage in explaining our language, so far as its Saxon derivation is concerned ; but he must remember that a volume of the Augustan Age of our literature is of more value than all the playthings of etymology.'

'"It is commonly observed that different climates, airs and aliments very much diversify the tone of the parts and muscles of human bodies ; on some of which the modulation of the voice much depends. The peculiar moisture of one country, the drought of another (other causes from food &c concurring) extend or contract, swell or attenuate the organs of the voice, that the sound made thereby is rendered either shrill or hoarse, soft or hard, plain, or lisping in proportion to that contraction or extension. And hence it is, that the Chinese or Tartars have some sounds in their language, that Europeans can hardly

[1] During these years Webster wrote a number of letters to the Society which caused much discussion. For instance : 'The conversation of the evening was chiefly at the expense of Noah Webster, as long as the Secretary kept awake. August 29th, 1809.' *Ibid.* p. 200.—[Ed.]

imitate; And it is well known in Europe itself, that an Englishman is not able agreeably to converse with a stranger even in one and the same Latin; nay even in England, it is noted by Mr. Camden and Dr Fuller that the natives of Carleton Curlew in Leicestershire, by a certain peculiarity of the place, have the turn of their voice very different from those of the neighboring villages."'[1]

From this extract it can be seen that Webster had noticed that consonants are interchangeable in different languages, and that climate and civilization modify and soften speech.

APPENDIX XXVII.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR THE DICTIONARY.

W. MSS.

'Contributors to aid in the prosecution of my Dictionary.

'William W. Woolsey.—in 1811. $100. in 1812. $200. [In pencil—paid]
'Oliver Wolcott— 100. [In pencil—copy of Dicy]
'Wm Leffingwell— 100.
'T Dwight Jun— 50—
'John P Mumford— 100 refunded June 1818
'Elias Kane— — 100
'Amasa Jackson— 50.
'N & G. Griswold— 50
'Lynde Catlin— 100. given [In pencil—copy]
'E Leavenworth— 50
'Daniel Wadsworth — — 100
'Abm Bradley 3d — — — 50 refunded 1820
'Eli Whitney— 50 [In pencil—copy]
'D Bethune.—100. not paid
'Mr Caldwell. 100. not paid.
'William Bartlet, Newbury port.—100—given.
'John Jay, Bedford, West Chester. [In pencil & 50.] 50 given.'

[1] Reference not found.—[Ed.]

APPENDIX XXVIII.

YOUTHFUL PIETY IN 1810.

Lest we seem to make an uncalled for distinction between the sexes, we venture to insert a part of two letters of Webster's second daughter, Emily (aged 17), after she also had become 'endued with' Calvinism. They were written to her friend Miss Rebecca Hine of New Milford.

W. MSS.

[New Haven,] April, 1810

'Is it indeed true my dear Girl, "that you feel more satisfaction and complacency in the contemplation of the divine character, than in that of any other object," then you are blest indeed, blest in the possession of that which is truly worth possessing, a source of enjoyment as substantial as pure, and lasting as substantial. Happy indeed is that being who lives to turn from the sickening scenes in which proud man loves to play his fantastic tricks, to contemplate perfection—who in all the vicissitudes of a life, chequered with an endless diversity of fortuitous events, still looks up with angel tranquillity, to Him who is good as great—immutable as good. The Divine Perfection! What an inexhaustible theme for meditation. What food for the contemplative mind to feast upon! Would that my grovelling heart intent on things of time, could learn to love, to soar with yours to the fountain of all excellence. It does sometimes attempt to fly, and pants for something beyond the vale of sense, but like the little bird scarce fledged, its flights are low. 'Tis scarcely ever borne on eagles wings to the great source of light, and life and peace. My moments of unmixed enjoyment are less frequent than formerly. I need not account for this defection to you. You can solve all difficulties. You have read my heart. He who seeks the Lord with his *whole heart* is sure to find and enjoy. Never the less trusting in his goodness and mercy, which have so long abounded toward me, I still find much enjoyment. A slender hope, compared with which the spider's most attenuated thread is cord and cable, sustains me amid the petty trials of life (for as to real evils, I have ever been a stranger).' * * *

W. MSS.

New Haven, August 21st 1810

'DEAR BECCA:

"Since I last addressed you sister Harriet has been laid very low by a terrible disease. A raging fever preyed upon her many days without intermission. On the tenth of her confinement we expected to resign her into the hands of her God. You, my dear friend, have gazed upon a dying sister, and have beheld a lovely brother on the bed of death, you may form some adequate idea of all we have felt the past week. The transition from the inflammatory state to what the physicians term the stage of debility was attended by so sudden and fearful a change of countenance from the deep flush of purple fever, to the pallid hue of death, that the physicians themselves had little hope of her recovery—the crisis was unexpected—she was probably ill a day or two previous to the yielding up. He who orders all things in infinite wisdom, now permits us to anticipate her recovery. She is evidently better. Youth and a fine constitution have baffled the destroyer, so far, that her friends look forward with ardent hopes to her restoration to that society to which she promises to become an ornament. Why is society, why is her family so solicitous for her convalescence? We see her in view of a quiet haven, struggling to get free from the fetters of mortality. Is it a proof of affection to wish her chained for a yet longer period to this frail shattered bark, to buffet life's stormy billows? She seems about to be emancipated from the vile body subject to pain and corruption which now envelops her angel spirit, and to assume a body luminous and incorruptible; is it acting a friendly part to be importunate in prayer for her recovery? *Father do what thou wilt with thine own!* Subject as we are to various and unexpected ills, liable to be arrested in high health by diseases and death, in the enjoyment of affluence and ease, to be plunged suddenly into depths of poverty, one hour surrounded by smiling friends, the next torn from their embraces; subject to such calamities as these, what miserable beings were mankind without the consolations of religion. He who can say my *Father's will be done* can triumph like Him at Gethsemane amid accumulating sorrows, and quaff the cup of bitterness to its last drop without a murmur. I have known no *real evils*; but my Becca, the petty everyday disappointments and vexations of the world call continually for the exercise of

the grace of perfect submission, a grace which too many of us lay up like our holiday clothes only to be produced on great occasions. He who portions out our troubles as well as our blessings, knows how much we are able to endure, and how much is requisite to keep us near him. Whenever I have been called to acknowledge that the hand of God was heavy upon me, I have been ready likewise to confess that I deserved not so gentle a rebuke; my punishment has always been light indeed compared with the guilt which incurred it. Sometimes I am inclined to believe that a greater share of misfortune would be beneficial to me. Perhaps God is trying me, and if blessings fail of keeping me humble and making me feel my dependence on him, then he will visit me with deeper and more poigant afflictions than I have hitherto known. But whether he smile, or frown, enrich or impoverish, he will not act without motives worthy of omniscience. If the rod is necessary to bring me to the station which is meet: I pray God that he will not spare it, but chasten me even as a parent chastises a son whom he loveth. Oh I believe, I sincerely believe the trials which flesh is heir to would be welcome to me, if I could indeed come forth as silver, purified by the refiner's fire—more weaned from the idols of time, more solicitous to do honor to the christian character. 'Tis a source of pleasurable reflection that *we shall not live always*; that every grief we feel, shortens the destined number, and when this probationary state terminates, we shall I trust be received into the palace of our Father, the King of Heaven to reign with Christ forever. Shall not we who believe ourselves possessed of a more noble title than earthly princes, despise the crosses and unpleasant casualities of the nursery, and joyfully anticipate the happy day which shall liberate us from the confines of the playroom, from the toys and hobby horses of time, and introduce us to our soverign, our benefactor—our Father who shall envest us with ensigns of royalty and permit us to stand in his presence in the presence of Him who shall meet us with the endearing title of Elder Brother."

"Love to dear friends—Papa—Mamma, Urania, &c."

'29. Harriet is better. She does not sit up yet and is in great pain but out of immediate danger. If a good opportunity occurs I will go to N. M. this fall, if Papa and Mamma will let me. I promise myself much pleasure from our uninterrupted company my next visit.'

APPENDIX XXIX.

JOSEPH LYMAN.

A fine jurist and public-spirited citizen of Northampton, memorialised in his daughter's volume, from which we quote:

'To many, many hearts the words "Judge Lyman" are charmed words. They call up the image of one, the manly beauty of whose person was but the fit expression of a most noble soul; they recall a man singularly gifted and singularly faithful,—a thinker, clear-sighted, yet reverent, a lover of religious liberty,—yet only for the pure Gospel's sake; a devoted friend, a self-sacrificing philanthropist, an ardent patriot, a man diligent in business, yet ready to meet the largest demands of every hospitable office; a cheerful giver, one who made virtue venerable and lovely by the uniform dignity, grace and courtesy of his manners, and by the sweetness of his speech; a man whose moral and social qualities so occupied attention, that we could hardly do justice to a very wise, discriminating and cultivated intellect.'

Recollections of my Mother, Mrs. Anne Jean Lyman of Northampton. Susan I. Lesley. p. 66.

APPENDIX XXX.

THE HARTFORD CONVENTION.

Later Memo. 'At the meeting, convened at Northampton, January 19, 1814, were present, Gen'l Maltby, Maj. Gen. Hoyt, Mr. E. Williams, Col. Porter, Gen'l Mattoon (but the latter left the meeting before the result) N. Webster and several gentlemen of Northampton. After consultation and the proposition made by N. Webster that a Convention of Delegates from the legislatures of the Northern States, to agree upon & urge certain amendments to the Constitution, should be requested by the several towns, N. Webster, Mr. Williams of Deerfield, & Lewis Strong, were appointed a Committee to draft a Circular letter to the towns & this task fell upon N. Webster, who made a

draft, which, with a few alterations, appeared as printed within. See the petitions of the several towns in Consequence of the Letter, and the Report of the Legislature on those petitions.

'The proposition for a Convention was not judged expedient at the Session of the General Court in January, 1814—but at the following Special Session in October, the proposition was introduced into a meeting of the Federalists, by Harrison G. Otis, Esq.[1] who assigned his reasons for opposing the measure, at the preceding Session—The principal reason was, that it might impede the negotiation between the United States & Great Britain then pending. I was now a member of the General Court, & gave the proposition my support although the Resolutions for appointing the delegates, & defining their powers, did not fully meet my views. Twelve delegates were appointed to meet at Hartford, December 15, 1814, Connecticut chose seven, Rhode Island four.

'N. WEBSTER. [W. MSS].

'I was not a member of the legislature in January 1814, but was elected in April following.'

Later Webster evidently desired to obtain accurately the facts concerning the Hartford Convention, probably for publication, for the two following letters are preserved in autograph.

From JOSEPH LYMAN.

'Northampton, Jan^{y} 2^{d}: 1835.

'MY DEAR SIR,

'I rec^{d} yours of the 20th ult. though not in the regular course of the mail—I recollect perfectly the circumstances which originated the Hartford Convention—the people in this part of the Country were much more excited than in most other parts of New England—there were some undoubtedly among the Officers of the Militia ripe for revolutionary measures, and were in favour of this preliminary step;; others more moderate united with them in order to gain time to allay the excitement—that the people should have something in prospect for relief—The legislatures of the several States, therefore made choice of Gentle-

[1] Harrison Gray Otis, a Bostonian publicist from 1796 until 1832, when he retired. He was distinguished as a popular orator—like his uncle James 'the great incendiary of New England.'

men to compose that Convention who perhaps had as much at stake as any like number that could have been selected and whose advice upon the subject would be adhered to—it was a safety-valve.

'I have searched in vain for the papers and proceedings of those times—I am glad to hear that you have preserved them—the Gentlemen who acted with me, in those days, that is the most efficient Actors are dead—Messrs. Ashman & Mills, Judge Hackner[?], Judge Leavitt, Hon. George Bliss, Judge Howe, Major Dwight, Hon. Jonathan H. Lyman &c. all dead—there are some few however of minor importance who were very uniform in favor of the measure still living but have since joined the vulgar hue & cry against the Convention—anything which you can do from the documents in your possession to develope the true source & cause of the proceedings of that Convention (which then & ever since I considered a wise measure) will confer a great favor on the Members of that Convention & their posterity—whether it will be in your power to disabuse the public mind at this time is questionable—I am however a gloomy politician and am ready to adopt the language of Pope,

> "Truth would you preach and save a sinking land,
> All hear, none aid you, and few understand"[1]

'If the people will not believe the testimony of M^r^ Dwight, and the more solemn testimony of M^r^ Sherman under oath—will they believe, tho' one rise from the dead—Notwithstanding my gloomy apprehensions, help us if you can.

I am respectfully,
Your much obliged friend,'

We find these additional notes in Webster's hand written between 1834 and 1841:

'Hartford Convention,

'The origin of this Convention was in Hampshire County, in January 1814. See the letter of Judge Lyman to N. Webster of Amherst, Paper No. 1.

[1] Pope's *Essay on Man.* Endorsed by Webster, and in his hand the word *Teach* is written above *preach*, and that of *fear* above *hear*.—[Ed.]

'In consequence of this Letter, a meeting was held in Northampton January 19, & after consultation, a circular was addressed to the several towns in the County. See the printed circular, paper No 2.

'In pursuance of the propositions in that circular the inhabitants of Northampton convened & voted a petition to the General Court. See the Petition in the Hampshire Gazette, Feb^{y} 2 1814. The petitions of Hatfield & Deerfield in the same paper.

'Resolves of Amherst on the same subject, Hampshire Gazette, Jan^{y} 19 1814.

'The proposition for a Convention was not made in the Legislature in January that year, for reasons which Mr. Otis assigned when he made the proposition in Caucus at the Extra Session in October following.

'N. Webster was a member of the House of Representatives, elected in April, 1814, & present when the proposition was first made by Mr. Otis & he advocated the proposition. See his Remarks in the Weekly Messenger of Boston & in the Dedham Gazette Nov. 1814.

'It will be observed that these papers show demonstrably that there was not the remotest design of disolving the Union.' [W. MSS.]

From HARRISON GRAY OTIS. W. MSS.

'Boston 6 may 1840.

'DEAR SIR:

'The best *general* answer which I can give to your favor of the 4th will be found in a note to M^{rs}. Willard's "history of the republic of America" page 351, extracted from a letter which I wrote her of which I have no copy—as follows "The Hartford Convention far from being the original contrivance of a cabal for any purposes of faction or disunion was a *result*, growing by natural consequence out of existing circumstances—More than a year previous to its institution, a convention was simultaneously called for by the people in their town meetings in all parts of Massachusetts. Petitions to that effect were accumulated on the tables of the legislative chambers, They were postpond for twelve months by the influence of those who

now sustain the odium of the measure—The adoption of it was the *consequence* not the *source* of a popular sentiment, and it was intended by those who voted for it as a safety valve by which the steam arising from the fermentation of the times might escape, not as a boiler in which it should be generated—whether good or ill, it was a measure of the people, of states, of legislatures. How unjust to brand the willing agents, the mere committees of legislative bodies with the stigma of acts which were first authorized & then sanctioned by their constituted assemblies."—This I repeat is a true *general* account of the matter—In reply to your precise questions whether the project had its origin in Boston or was suggested by any gentleman in Boston, I can give none other than a direct negative founded on the best of my knowledge & belief—If it were otherwise I presume I would have known it—You know as well at least as I do, that from the breaking out of the war untill the fall of 1814 the great object of the popular meetings and of the legislative proceedings was to compell Government to avail itself of the disposition manifested by G. Britain & to make peace.—The language of some of the primary assemblies was often high toned & menacing—All of them look'd to *some* remedy supposed to be within the competency of the legislature—Among the least exceptionable—Perhaps the only one that was constitutional & peac[e]able was that of a convention—The leading members in the legislature had on hand an embarrassing task—It was impossible for them to say "thus far may ye come but no further," with out refrigerating the popular zeal in opposition to the ruinous system of Govern[t]—Nor could they sustain the petitions & predicate upon them legislative resolutions without encouraging expectations of rleif [relief] sought by the Petitioners, which could not be afforded by the Legislature, unless by avowed *nullification*; for which those leading persons were by no means prepared or desirous—In this posture of affairs the extra session of Nov 1814 was demanded by the public sentiment—All hope of stopping hostilities was at [an] end—One, or more meetings were held in Boston of a few influential members of the Legislature, to digest some project for the action of that body so that the Session might not on the one hand end in abortion nor on the other produce violent measures—

'At this meeting, it was found and agreed that the sentiments of our Country friends predominated in favor of a Convention of

the N. England States, *and upon the faith of that persuasion*, it was determined to cooperate with them in promoting it, and to use it as a medium for obtaining from the General Government if possible, security against Conscription, taxes & the danger of invasion by being allowed to take care of ourselves, & in any event, for restraining the tendency to excess manifested in some of the petitions, by a "declaration of rights" coupled with a declaration of duties. Thus in fact we at Boston played only second fiddle to our Country friends—In what order and what times the Petitions came in, I cannot say without recurring to the public files—My impression is that the County of Hampshire was always foremost in these matters, and that if I had been hanged as a ringleader, you and your friends had been bound in honor to maintain my family—As to W. Adams, he can know nothing about it—And as to what he may imagine or invent, it will not surprise me, should it turn out to be gall & wormwood; blasting to the utmost of his power the measure and its friends or "damning" the latter "with faint praise." I am glad to find that your curiosity can be stimulated in such matters. Mine is all sunk in contempt & indifference. I am D^r^ Sir,

Very respect^y^ & faith^y^ y^rs^

APPENDIX XXXI.

AMHERST COLLEGE.

The Documents, in Webster's handwriting, and which he evidently prepared as Chairman of various Committees, are:

1st, The Circular to all the Clergymen of the region calling a Convention at Amherst to confer with the Trustees of Amherst Academy in regard to the 'establishment of a Charitable Institution,' dated Amherst, September 11^th^, 1818.

2nd, Reasons for locating Williams College in Amherst read to the Committee, Mess. Kent, Smith, and Payson, when they met at Northampton.

3rd, A paper for obtaining subscriptions to the Fund in Boston.

4th, A paper giving authority from the Trustees to himself, and John Fiske to solicit subscriptions.

5th, An introduction to the Ceremonies of Dedication and the Inauguration of officers of the Collegiate Institute at Amherst, Sept. 18, 1821.

This document might be called the confession of faith of Amherst College, and in the body corporate Webster might be called the brain and the mouthpiece and the other ardent Christian projectors, the heart and hands and the feet which carried this daring visionary project into effect and gave it bodily shape and substance.

We quote from it as follows:

'A number of Charitable citizens of this State, having by donations, constituted a fund for the education of pious young men for the gospel ministry and having committed that fund to the management of the Board of Trustees of the Academy in this town, until an Act of Incorporation shall be obtained; the Board in pursuance of their powers and in execution of their trust, have erected a College Edifice for the accommodation of students and have appointed a President and Professors qualified to give them a Collegiate Education. And in conformity to the recommendation of a respectable number of the clergy and laity of this and the neighboring counties, convened in this town in September, 1818, the Board propose to annex to this Institution, a college for the education of young men who have the means of defraying their expenses.

'As it is the duty of men on all occasions, to acknowledge their dependance on divine aid, for success in their lawful enterprises, so it is peculiarly proper that an undertaking which has for its special object, the promotion of the Christian religion should be commended to the favor and protection of the great head of the church. To His service is the charity Fund consecrated by the donors and to him is the edifice now erected to be at this time solemnly dedicated. (Here followed prayer by the Rev. Mr. Crosby of Enfield, Mass, then a sermon by Rev. Dr. Leland of Charleston, S.C.) 'The Board of Trustees have elected the Rev. Zephaniah Swift Moore to be President of the Collegiate Institution in this town; President ex officio, of Theol. and Moral Philosophy. They have also elected the Rev. Gamaliel S. Olds to be Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and Mr. Joseph Estabrook to be Professor of the Latin and Greek languages, in the same Institution. Mr. Olds is not present, but he has accepted his

appointment and is expected shortly to enter on the duties of his office.

'To Pres. Moore, Reverend Sir, Do you now publicly manifest your acceptance of the office of President of the Collegiate Institution in this town?

'To Mr. Estabrook, Respected Sir, Do you now publicly manifest your acceptance of the office of Professor of the Greek and Latin languages in the Collegiate Institution in this town?

'Then in behalf of the Board of Trustees and by their authority, I publicly announce that you, Zephaniah Swift Moore are constituted President of the Collegiate Institution in this town, and by the same authority you are invested with the power of superintending, instructing and governing the students according to your best discretion and according to the statutes and regulations that are or may be established for these purposes.

'And I farther declare that you Joseph Estabrook are by the same authority, constituted Professor of the Greek and Latin languages in the same Seminary with power to assist the President in the instruction of the Students and in the government and discipline of the Institution.

'Sensible of the difficulties which will attend a faithful and discreet discharge of your arduous duties; feeling their own responsibility, and solicitous to promote the best interests of the Seminary; the Board of Trustees will cheerfully co-operate with you Gentlemen, in such measures as circumstances may demand, or prudence dictate, for giving effect to the regulations prescribed, and will assist in devising the best means for elevating the character and extending the usefulness of the Institution.

'Most devoutly and most affectionately, Dear Sirs, do we commend you to the holy guidance and protection of the Supreme Head of the Church, to whose service this institution is consecrated. Most earnestly do we pray that the blessing of heaven may accompany your labors and crown them with success! Under your pious care and diligent instruction and prudent government may this infant Seminary commend itself to the affection and respect of the community; while the fostering patronage of the Christian public shall raise it to distinction among the literary institutions of the American Republic.

'By your precepts and example may virtue be honored &

piety encouraged, among the youth of the Seminary; while every species of immorality shall be discountenanced & repressed. May your instructions enlarge the sphere of intellectual improvement, & circumscribe the dominion of error. In yonder Edifice may the youth of America be richly furnished with the science & erudition which shall qualify them for eminent usefulness in Church & State. There may they be instructed in the principles of our Holy Religion, & armed with fortitude & grace to defend & maintain its doctrines in their Apostolic purity.

'And while your labors contribute to exalt the moral, religious & literary character of your own country, may there issue from this Seminary some beams of the light of civilization & of heavenly truth, to illuminate the "dark places of the earth which are full of the habitations of cruelty." Here may a flame of holy zeal be enkindled in the breasts of young christians, which shall glow with inextinguishable ardor, & animate them with courage to hasard all temporal enjoyments & life itself, in bearing the message of redeeming love to an ignorant and guilty world.

'And when your labors on earth shall have ceased, may it be your everlasting joy, that you have been the instrument of preparing many souls to join that great multitude which no man can number, whose blissful employment, it shall be, to ascribe salvation to him that sitteth on the throne & to the Lamb forever.' [W. MSS.]

APPENDIX XXXII.

MRS. COBB.

From ELIZA S. W. JONES to EMILY E. F. FORD. W. MSS.

[Bridgeport] The 16th of Dec 85

'My dear Emily

'I received & read the letter with great interest. Your Mothers husband "Edward" died as the ship entered the harbor the day after the date of her letter as I believe. She wakened in the morning to hear him cough & then the death

rattle and all was over—The quarantine officers came on board & the remains were soon taken from her room. I shall never forget the narrative of my sisters distress, & how Mr Cobb heard at Charleston S.C. on their returning voyage of the death of the babe, & feared to tell her. He told Dr Palmer the Pastor there & on the Sabbath he preached a sermon from the text, "Is it well with thee with thy husband & the child?" but sister did not suspect, & Father Cobb did not tell her till she reached Boston. When at home in Portland she insisted on going into the vault where the remains of her babe had been placed & as it had been cold weather there, she was at last permitted to go on the condition that she would not lift her veil. You may know all these incidents, dear Emily but never mind if you do. Your letter awakened my memory.

'I do know one reason why Father left Amherst because he several times mentioned it before me. He intended going to Europe & wished to "leave Mother & Louise under the protection of brother & sister Goodrich." The comfort which sister Julia could give to Mother he appreciated, & then too he needed the aid of books from the Yale library. I can imagine the reason but do not remember hearing from him or Mother of any.'

APPENDIX XXXIII.

MRS. SOUTHGATE.

The long letter from Mr. Southgate, of tender details of his wife Mary Webster Southgate's last illness is extant, and blotted with many tears of the writer. He dwells on the spiritual exaltation of his suffering wife, her patience, her cheerfulness, but the record seems sacred, too sacred to print. Only his testimony to her character which fills the ninth and concluding page of this beautiful letter is also a testimony to the faithful and loving parents who had trained and perfected her character:

W. MSS.

'Justice to the memory of the dearest of women bids me add one word more, and that on the subject of our connexion. There could not have been a woman found more happily

formed to my disposition, taste & feelings. I know not one quality of mind or body which I could have wished changed—her ingenuousness, cheerfulness and affection warmed my heart, morning, noon and evening, and animated my spirits as food did my body. She possessed the unqualified love of my whole family and had you seen how my children and domestics wept over her, you would have exclaimed "how they loved her." Though young and inexperienced in the cares of a family like mine, but a few weeks were necessary to make them familiar and easy. With such perfect good will did she attend to every duty, that it would seem to her she had done nothing, and yet so great was her fidelity in every branch of domestic life as to leave nothing to be done. What have I lost, He only knows who gave her to me. What I need to support me under such a bereavement, He who took her to himself alone can bestow. It would be gratifying to me, Dear Sir, that from the fragments I furnish, and your own knowledge of other facts, an obituary notice of my dear Mary might appear in the Panoplist and Recorder. My little infant Mary Webster is at nurse and in health. I hope my sorrows are not to be increased by being deprived of the pleasure of your letters occasionally, that I may hear of the welfare of a family for whom I shall always feel the strongest affection.'

APPENDIX XXXIV.

MRS. M. W. BOLTWOOD'S RECOLLECTIONS.

To Emily E. F. Ford. W. MSS.

'Amherst, Nov. 25, 1882.

*** 'The requests you make of me in regard to your honored Grandparents, considering it as a compliment to be thus asked for memories of such excellent people. Mr. Boltwood had a great regard for Dr. and Mrs. Webster. He was most fortunate in being received into their family circle while they resided in Amherst. They had gone to New Haven before I came here, but from my husband, I learned much of them, and when we went to New Haven we used always to call upon them. I call to mind in this connexion the polite attentions of your

Grandfather in walking up to my brother's house, a mile, to return our call. The influence of Mr. Webster's family in Amherst was very great, at the time we removed here. Unless you can measure the good that has come from Amherst Academy and Amherst College, you can never estimate the good done by your Grandfather. Mr. Boltwood felt that he was the master spirit in all these improvements. I think I told you of my good fortune in my childhood of being for some months under the same roof as Madam Pope of New Bedford, a sister of your Grandmother. The son, Mr. Thomas Pope kept the house, the old Pope mansion. While I was there Mrs. Pope had a sort of family meeting of her brothers and sisters, and I can assure you that even now the impression of their courteous and dignified bearing still lingers. My elder sister with whom I was engaged in school and who was favored with an intimacy with Mrs. Pope and Mrs. Bell, another sister, had a high appreciation of these excellent women. As it regards myself I owe your Grandmother a debt of gratitude in that through her wise training of an "ignorant girl" (as Diana herself expressed it, when speaking of her coming to Mrs. Webster) I was favored with an excellent domestic for ten long years. There is even now to my mind a secret, how Mrs. Webster could get such an influence, and that it should last through her long life. To all the families she lived with, she rendered "good and laudable" service. In Amherst she lived with Mrs. Lucinda Dickinson, with Mrs. Montague, the mother of Miss Harriet Montague, with Doct. Humphrey and with me. She went and lived with your mother in Greenfield, and was in her family when you were born. She always spoke of your mother as if she was more than human and akin to angels. I dare say she was ready to pay you the truest devotion when you were given to your parents. She had a perfect love for every infant, but to those who were committed to her care, she had the most wonderful power of ministering in the best way, so that the most restless babe would lie down in her arms in perfect quiet. Diana married and had sons, and lived to see them married and ministered to grandchildren. After she was a widow she used to come twice a year to visit me. I was always glad to see her and gave her the sunniest chamber and warmest nook by the fireside. She visited me last autumn and in the spring I was thinking every day that it was about time

for Diana to come, when I received a telegram from her son in Montague that "mother had passed away." When I came to see her son, he told me that his mother had been during the latter part of the winter stopping with her last remaining sister who was in feeble health. She staid with her until she died and then came back to her son in Montague. She was quite comfortable, only worn, and expected to come to Amherst, but was taken with a lung trouble and laid up in bed but three days when she slept in death. Dear Good Soul! she filled up her life with quiet duties, and I doubt not found an abundant entrance into that heaven to which she had ever aspired. She cared for my precious little ones a great many years ago, and she grieved with me when they were called away, and her memory was very pleasant to me, as day by day I bring to mind some pleasant little thing connected with her visits to me. She was a thoroughly honest and good woman with whom the faithful discharge of duty had become the habit of every day, and it is pleasant to think that in that better world into which she has now passed, the paltry distinctions of condition shall separate no longer between God's faithful servants.'

APPENDIX XXXV.

DIPLOMAS AND DEGREES.

1. Abolition Society, 1790.
2. Massachusetts Historical Society, 1792.
3. Diploma from the Whig Society of North Carolina, 1795.
4. American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Massachusetts, 1799.
5. The Academy of Medicine, Philadelphia, 1800.
6. New York Historical Society, 1809.
7. LL.D. from Yale College in 1823.
8. From the American Philosophic Society of Philadelphia, 1827.
9. The Royal Academy of Science, Paris, France, 1829.
10. American Institute, Springfield, Massachusetts, 1829.
11. LL.D. from Middlebury College, 1830.
12. The Society of Adelphi in Union College, 1830.

13. Columbian Institute, Washington, 1831.
14. Philoclean Society of Rutgers College, 1833.
15. Phi Gamma Alpha Society of Hamilton College, 1834.
16. Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1837.
17. The Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, Copenhagen, 1838.
18. Connecticut Historical Society, 1839.
19. Georgia Historical Society, 1839.
20. Michigan Historical Society, 1840.
21. Horticultural Society of New Haven, 1841.
22. National Institute of Washington, 1842.
23. American Oriental Society, Boston, 1842.

APPENDIX XXXVI.

WEBSTER'S BUST.

From WILLIAM CHAUNCEY FOWLER. [W. MSS.]

'Amherst College July 17, 1840

***'I have delayed a reply to your favor for the purpose (of) laying the subject of it before the Faculty, which I did at their last meeting with very respectful expressions of good will they requested of me that I would ask of you the favor to furnish us with a Bust for one of the public rooms, and that you would do it in time to refer the matter to the corporation at their meeting at Commencement. I have written a letter to Hartford requesting Gov Ellsworth to forward it with (illegible) by water, as I understood from William's letter that it had been sent on there.'

APPENDIX XXXVII.

AN AMERICAN POINT OF VIEW.

From WILLIAM C. WOODBRIDGE. W. MSS.

Paris April 13. 1825

'MY DEAR SIR

'Since you mentioned the subject of the evening or rather morning parties of London, & thus virtually called for my

opinion concerning them, I have reproached myself that I did not give it more fully; and you must therefore regard it as an act of Christian friendship & *duty* that I do it now.

'My own opinion perfectly coincides with that of every pious man whom I have heard speak on the subject in England—that they are utterly opposed to the progress of Christian feeling, & the promotion of evangelical religion. They are the resort almost exclusively of the worldly, they are scenes devoted to worldly amusements & pleasures, & they are seldom capable of affording rational amusement. They introduce one into the current of fashionable life. They impose a necessity on all who frequent them to conform in some degree to their spirit, or to be idle spectators. They prisent the strongest motives—they almost demand it as a tribute to civility—to follow the multitude. I have uniformly heard that those of a fashionable family who become serious desert these places entirely, & I have heard of none of the serious who frequented them, except some of our own countrymen who have gradually abandoned everything of an external nature which distinguished them from the world.

'Allow me to speak with Christian freedom—for we are members of one church, & your best friends are among those dearest to me. I should deeply lament your entering these scenes of dissipation as the religious would regard them. It will bring a cloud over your profession. It will furnish an other example of which the world may say as I have heard them say of another—He is become as one of us. It will grieve your father & your friends. Permit me to say that in your own case I cannot but view the danger as greater than usual, because your disposition renders you more than usually sensible to the polite & kind attentions & persuasions you will meet, that you will find yourself gradually receding farther and farther from the firmness & simplicity of a Christian.

'I fully believe that I may venture to urge you in the name of your friends not to enter these resorts of fashion & folly, as you value the spirit of piety & the honour of the religion you profess. If I have spoken too plainly, remember that only one motive can actuate me—& that a friendly motive.

'I enclose a letter for your father containing an account of myself. Write to me Care of E. M. Ely, 23 Place Vendome.

'Yours with sincere regard,'

APPENDIX XXXVIII.

LUCY GRIFFIN.[1]

After Webster's death his widow and youngest daughter Louisa, the only spinster of the flock, continued their residence in the house which he had built, cared for by their faithful servant, Lucy Griffin. This colored woman, black, and of the most pronounced African type was brought up from childhood by my paternal Grandmother, M^rs^ Reuben Rose Fowler (*née* Catherine Chauncey). She made an admirable servant, and was urged by M^rs^ Fowler to leave her, and take high wages in the family of Captain Hart of Lynn. Here she proved such an excellent cook, superior laundress and complete waitress and chambermaid that little by little the whole household work was transferred to her shoulders. There was one daughter, a recluse in her chamber, said to have retired from society because of a disappointment in love, who would eat nothing that Lucy did not cook, and the laundering and fluting of her ruffled dressing gowns was also handed over to the same Lucy. It was said that the Father—having broken off the love affair—wished to indulge this petted creature in all other ways, and required that every wish of hers should be gratified. Once a week, she left her bed, and sat up in full dress to receive a formal visit from him. The daughters were very beautiful, and very bewitching. Two married Commodores Hull—uncle and nephew—and one a M^r^ Allen, and she died in a few months, requesting to be laid out in her bridal robes. One, the most beautiful, Jeannette remained unmarried; and also the invalid by choice, whose name, I think was Mary, and who died single after years of seclusion.

But at the time Lucy Griffin went to live with them the household was filled with beautiful daughters, and was kept up with luxury for those days.

In consequence of these varied labors Lucy Griffin lost her health and came back, worn out, to recuperate with my Grandmother Fowler. My Father knowing her goodness, and the great system and simplicity of Webster's household proposed to bring her on trial at a moment when the family were without

[1] By Emily Ellsworth Fowler Ford.—[Ed.]

a servant, and she remained with them from that time until the home broke up, some months after Mrs Webster's death.

In Webster's will it was found that he had supplemented the modest wages of a dollar a week of those days by regularly putting twenty dollars a year in the bank to her account. At his death Lucy found herself a wealthy woman in her church and society. After Mrs Webster's death she took a little house in the outskirts of New Haven, and for years made all the fine pastry for the Tontine Hotel and New Haven House with additional earnings from doing up fine muslins, dresses and embroideries. She was of much consideration for years among her race, but at the very last learned to drink and became poor in consequence. The branches of the Webster family residing in New Haven cared most kindly for her until the end came. We all loved and respected her and her kitchen was an ideal place of joy, and comfort for the grandchildren. Her bright, respectful, 'Good morning Miss Emily, how does Miss Emily find herself this morning?' was a mixture of kindness and politeness that made me respect myself; while her pantry of goodies, always of the best and most delicate preparation, were free to our hands. Her heart was full of love, and her hands of faithful service.

From the NEW YORK OBSERVER, July 17, 1847.

'THE WIFE OF NOAH WEBSTER.[1]

'The aged widow of the distinguished American Lexicographer entered on her rest June 25, at the advanced age of 81 years. For nearly a year she had survived a paralytic stroke, though suffering intensely from its effects. It was a year of Christian submission, and saint-like triumph, and when death came at last, it was as a welcome friend and deliverer.

'Mrs. Webster possessed a mind of unusual strength, cultivated and refined. For half a century her associations had been with learned and literary circles. In early life her mind was warped by error in religious opinion; but in her maturer years she renounced it for the faith of Jesus, as a divine, atoning Savior; and for more than thirty years lived a cheerful, consistent, devoted Christian.

[1] Perhaps by Henry Jones.—[Ed.]

'The writer of this paragraph will never forget the scene witnessed in Mrs. W's sick room a few months since *** Though suffering under a disease which usually prostrates the mental with the bodily powers, her intellectual faculties seemed to possess the vigor of youth with the maturity of age, while her faith triumphed over approaching death. She was as cheerful and buoyant as in health, and spoke of her departure as calmly and exultingly as of a journey with a friend. "My son," said she, "I wish you to pray with me: I am greedy for prayer. Do not ask that I may recover; I neither expect nor desire it—but that the Lord will enable me to honor him while I remain, and give me a comfortable exit from this life." Alluding to the kindness of Prof. G. [oodrich] her son-in-law, in praying daily at her bed-side, she remarked that the passages of Scripture he quoted furnished texts for meditation during the waking hours of the night, suggesting related passages all through the Bible. "I am very thankful," said she, "that in my youth I was lead to read the Scriptures and sacred Hymns to a brother who was blind: for it induced me to form the habit of committing such writings to memory. At an early period I could repeat the Psalms and other portions of the Old Testament, all the Gospels, some of the Epistles, and nearly all of Watts' Psalms and Hymns. Now they are a priceless comfort to me. I wish you would inculcate the duty on all your young friends of committing large portions of the Scriptures and Spiritual songs to memory. The young will grow old; and in their days of helplessness this habit will furnish them with honey from the rock."' ***

APPENDIX XXXIX.

WILLIAM G. WEBSTER'S SENTIMENTALITY.

From WILLIAM GREENLEAF WEBSTER. W. MSS.

'Winchester [Virginia] 12" May. 1831.

'MY DEAR & HONORED MOTHER.

'The "5th of May" proved a mild, delightful, genial day, & its evening calm & serene—a propitious omen for the happiness of the pair whose earthly destinies were to be united—

irrevocably united—Precisely at 1/4 7 o'clock our bridal party entered Mr. Jackson's beautiful Gothic church, where the character of our affections was to be changed, & your only William & his beloved Rosalie were to exchange their vows in presence of a few assembled friends, who gazed anxiously at the trembling bride & agitated but not embarrassed groom as they approached the sacred altar. The moment was one of intense interest, & the soft dim light admitted through Venetian blinds at that hour, & the breathless silence which prevailed added much to the deep impressive solemnity of the occasion.

'The marriage ceremony seemed unusually short. Rosalie trembled like an aspen. I feared she would faint. But she summoned her self possession, & pronounced audibly—nay *firmly* her nuptial vows. Then followed kisses & congratulations from her female friends, & the party reentering their carriage returned to Mrs. Waite's. As you & all of woman kind are curious to know the paraphernalia of the bride I will try to give it. She was attired in a simple white muslin, edged with lace, made fashionably full (tho' not *ditto* short) wore over a corded cambric skirt. Her hair is short & curled in close infantile ringlets, their only adornment consisting of a lovely bandeau formed of gauze ribbands, & bunches of natural lillys of the valley, & the

"white veil o'er her streaming,
Like a silvery halo gleaming,"

gave a hundred fold more interest to the loveliness of the bride.

"Then the holy vow did tremble on her lip,
When at God's blessed altar she did kneel
So meek & beautiful, thou wouldst have deemed
Some angel there did pray"—

'Mrs. Waite had invited a large but *select* company to celebrate our nuptial feast. Most of them attended & were presented on their entrance to *Mr. & Mrs. Webster*, with a dignified grace by Mr. Waite.

'Mrs. W——s entertainment was bounteous, beautiful & splendid. Jellies, whips, ices & blanc manges, all of various & tasteful hues & forms. Nuts, fruits, kisses, wine, lemonade, &c. &c. 4 large waiters often circulated thro' the rooms. They were loaded with delicious cakes, black, sponge & pound—all

handsomely molded into different forms. Turks heads, & large fluted round cakes, &c, ornamented with baskets of sugar fruit. About 11 o'clock, a small table was rolled out & on it placed the "bridal loaf," decidedly one of the handsomest I ever saw. It was a tall pyramid, formed by fluted cakes of graduated sizes, placed one on the other, all iced together. The dressing was formed by branches of hawthorne towering from the top, & the base &c encircled by wreaths of double white narcissus & lillies of the valley. Thus the evening passed off most agreeably. Your Wm's face was said "to be radiant with joy" & some who would flatter the groom even *pretended* to think him "handsome & interesting!!" acquitting himself "admirably thro' the trying circumstances of the occasion."

'On Friday, Saturday & Monday, we received the congratulations of the ladies & gentlemen of the place. Gen. Walter Jones, of Washington City honored our party. A son of Mr. Nathan Whiting has been spending the last fortnight here, but I could not induce him to join our party on Thursday Eve'g, from reasons connected with his business here but I have since presented him to Mrs. Webster, as an old college acquaintance.

'Rosalie, your daughter, is happy, perfectly happy, in the consciousness of once more possessing the affectionate love of a Mother & of a Father. Don't suffer her so long orphaned heart, to experience disappointment in the degree of welcome you will give her. Love her as your other daughters. She is so worthy of your love, & her heart will respond to yours, as fondly, as devotedly as ever mother wished.

'I have sent a piece of my wedding cake to you, or rather to Washington for you. I believe cousin Eliot leaves the City soon for the East, & have written for him to take charge of it. Also a Winchester paper by to-day's mail, with notice of my marriage. "*Stuart*" is spelled wrong in it. Tis a *royal* name and should not be misspelled.

'Rosalie Eugenia joins with me in the most sincere & devoted attachment to

'Father, Mother, sisters, brothers & niece.
Your dutiful & aff. son,'

APPENDIX XL.

SPECIMENS OF WEBSTER'S POLEMICS.

'*To the Editor of the Palladium.* W. MSS.

'I shall not discuss with any person the subject of parties: this would be of no use. But to close my remarks, I will relate what I once heard from D^r^ Franklin, who was distinguished by his good sense. After he was eighty years of age, he said to me, "*Sir, I have been all my life changing my opinions.*" Now, at seventy six years of age, I can say the same thing; I have, in the course of my life, been often obliged to change my opinions. I began life, as other young men do, full of confidence in my own opinions; many of which I afterwards found to be visionary & deceptive. It is probable that you, Sir, if you live many years, may find your strong confidence must yield to truths resulting from experience; truths which no arguments would *now* induce you to believe. That some of your opinions on the subject of government, & some opinions that are now maintained by *both* & by *all* political parties, are fallacious & deceptive, is, in my view, unquestionable. To err is the lot of humanity.

'How much of the *Spirit of aristocracy* I possess, must be left to the judgment of the world. It is not more I hope than that of many young men of this age, who positively contradict the opinions & decisions of Gen. Washington & the Supreme Court of the United States. I began life by ardently embracing republican principles; these I learned from some acquaintance with law & history, in the school of Washington, & of the great & worthy men who assisted in obtaining Independence, & in the formation & organization of the government.

***'I am a farmer's son, & have collected all the small portion of property which I possess, by untiring efforts & labors to promote the literary improvement, of my fellow citizens, & to establish the freedom & tranquillity of my country. If I have any other aristocracy about me, it must be my *old age*; an aristocracy resulting from God's appointment, with a reference doubtless to the advantage which society may derive from the

wisdom, prudence & corrected judgment which age only can furnish.

'N. WEBSTER.

'New Haven Feb^{y}. 17. 1835'

W. MSS.

MESS^{RS} EDITORS[1]

As some of your correspondents are disposed to find what I have *not* done in making a dictionary, I will thank them to tell your readers what I *have* done. If they are not satisfied with the books I have published, they have perfect liberty to make a better one. I am sure that before they have collected thirty or forty thousand words, the number I have added to the English vocabularies, traced them to their origin, as far as they can, & defined them; & after they have spent thirty thousand dollars in the work; they will regret the undertaking.

In due time I hope to prepare a synopsis of what I have done, & of what the English have *not* done[2]

N. WEBSTER

APPENDIX XLI.

BEQUESTS OF BOOKS.

Webster divided his library between his children and Amherst and Yale Colleges, leaving lists of books in his own handwriting for each recipient. He had previously given books to Middlebury, Union and Harvard Colleges, the literary societies of Yale, Sherburne Academy, Chenango Co., N.Y., and the Connecticut Historical Society, besides smaller donations in many directions.

'The following Books I give to my Nephew John Belden & to the pastor of the Church, for the time being, in West Hartford, my native place, in trust for the use of any proprietors Library,

[1] 'He was the soul of honor and uprightness in all his dealings, but so much the retired scholar that he was unduly sensitive of supposed encroachments on the field of labor which he had made so largely his own.' *Yale Biographies*, F. B. Dexter.

[2] This was after the publication of his *Improved Grammar*.

which is now or may be formed by any of the inhabitants, with power to appoint trustees after the death of the said Belden & Pastor, to manage the concerns of said Library.

	Vol.
'Historical Collections, Massachusetts	10
'Memoirs of Historical Society, Pennsylvania	2
'Neal's History of New England	2
'Hutchinson History of Massachusetts & Minots Continuation	3
'Minots History of the Insurrection	1
'Sullivans History of Maine	1
'Carver's Travels	1
'Mackenzie's Voyages	1
'Josephus's History	6
'Drayton's South Carolina	1
'Edwards on the Affections	1
'Christian Magazine	3
'Life of Paul Jones	1
'Annals of Yale College	1
'Morse's Report on Indians	1
'Burgoyne's Defense	1
'History of New Haven	1
'Smith's Essay	1
'Webster's History of Animals	1
'Parents Present	1
'Trumbull's twelve Discourses	1
'Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge	1
'Barrow's Travels	1
'Jefferson's Notes	1
'Letters to a Young Gentleman	1
'Life of President Stiles	1
'Advocate of Peace	1
'History of Popery	1
'Colton's four years in Great Britain	2
'Reed & Mathison	2
'Webster's United States	1
do Lessons for Youth	1
'Richmonds Memoirs	1
'Brewer's Turkey	1
'Hinman's Antiquities	1
'Humphrey's Discourses	1

	Vol.
'History of Connecticut by Peters - - -	1
'Stiles Judges - - - - - - - -	1
'Woodruff's Malta - - - - - - -	1
'Miss Beecher on Difficulties of Religion - -	1
'Blair's Preceptor - - - - - - -	1
'Value of the Bible - - - - - - -	1'

APPENDIX XLII.

THE GROWTH OF LANGUAGE.

A modern writer who pays great attention to style, and who it is claimed by his contemporaries, writes his own language with the greatest precision and elegance, puts forth some of the same ideas which Webster advanced, but in modern shape and phraseology. As he has anticipated in print some of the very things the Compiler had intended to say, she prefers at this point to speak through him, and to strengthen her views by his delicate and discriminating expression of her similar thought and opinion.

'We have the more patience because we hope that our inherited English may be constantly freshened and revived from the native sources which literary decentralization will help to keep open, and we will own that as we turned over those novels coming from Philadelphia, from New Mexico, from Boston, from Tennessee, from rural New England, from New York, every local flavor of diction gave us courage and pleasure. M. Alphonse Daudet, in a conversation which Mr. Boyesen has set down in a recently recorded interview with him, said, in speaking of Tourguéneff: "What a luxury it must be to have a great big untrodden barbaric language to wade into! We poor fellows who work in the language of an old civilization, we may sit and chisel our little verbal felicities, only to find in the end that it is a borrowed jewel we are polishing. The crown jewels of our French tongue have passed through the hands of so many generations of monarchs that it seems like presumption on the part of any late-born pretender to attempt to wear them."

'This grief is, of course, a little whimsical. M. Daudet was expecting Mr. Boyesen to say, as he immediately said, that M.

Daudet was himself a living refutation, and so forth, and so forth; yet it has a certain measure of reason in it, and the same regret has been more seriously expressed by the Italian poet Aleardi:

> "Muse of an aged people, in the eve
> Of fading civilization, I was born.
> * * * Oh, fortunate,
> My sisters, who in the heroic dawn
> Of races sung! To them did destiny give
> The virgin fire and chaste ingenuousness
> Of their land's speech; and, reverenced, their hands
> Ran over potent strings."

'It will never do to allow that we are at such a desperate pass in English, but something of this divine despair we may feel too in thinking of "the spacious times of great Elizabeth," when the poets were trying the stops of the young language, and thrilling with the surprises of their own music. We may comfort ourselves, however, unless we prefer a luxury of grief, by remembering that no language is ever old on the lips of those who speak it, no matter how decrepit it drops from the pen. We have only to leave our studies, editorial and other, and go into the shops and fields to find the "spacious times" again; and from the beginning Realism, before she had got a name or put on her capital letter, had divined this near-at-hand truth along with the rest. Mr. Lowell, the greatest and finest realist who ever wrought in verse, showed us that Elizabeth was still Queen where he heard Yankee farmers talk; and without asking that our novelists of the widely scattered centres shall each seek to write in his local dialect, we are glad, as we say, of every tint any of them gets from the parlance he hears; it is much better than the tint he will get from the parlance he reads. One need not invite slang into the company of its betters, though perhaps slang has been dropping its *s* and becoming language ever since the world began, and is certainly sometimes delightful and forcible beyond the reach of the dictionary. We would not have any one go about for new words, but if one of them came aptly, not to reject its help. For our novelists to try to write Americanly, from any motive, would be a dismal error, but being born Americans, we would have them use "Americanisms" whenever these serve their turn; and when their characters

speak, we should like to hear them speak true American, with all the varying Tennesseean, Philadelphian, Bostonian, and New York accents. If we bother ourselves to write what the critics imagine to be "English" we shall be priggish and artificial, and still more so if we make our Americans talk "English." There is also this serious disadvantage about "English" that if we wrote the best "English" in the world, probably the English themselves would not know it, or, if they did, certainly would not own it. It has always been supposed by grammarians and purists that a language can be kept as they find it, but languages, while they live, are perpetually changing. God apparently meant them for the common people—whom Lincoln believed God liked because He had made so many of them; and the common people will use them freely as they use other gifts of God. On their lips our continental English will differ more and more from the insular English, and we believe that this is not deplorable, but desirable. Our tongue will always be intelligible enough to our cousins across seas to enable them to enjoy this department of the *New Monthly*, and we should not fear a diminished circulation of the Magazine among them if we became quite faithful in our written English to the spoken English of this continent.' William Dean Howells in The Editor's Study, *Harper's New Magazine*, January, 1886.

CHECK LIST OF THE WRITINGS OF NOAH WEBSTER

THE following list makes no pretense to containing all the many issues and editions of Webster's writings. The popularity of the *Prompter* and *Spelling Book* led to many editions, and often to editions that soon disappeared. Like the *New England Primer*, of the immense number printed only a few copies remain in existence, and the earlier imprints are already numbered among the rarities of Americana. Of the *Dictionary*, abridged, enlarged, amended or improved, there are almost countless editions, but only the earlier ones are indicated. It is hoped to issue a more complete Bibliography later.

EMILY E. F. SKEEL.

The initials used indicate the following:

A.A.S., American Antiquarian Society.
A.P.S., American Philosophical Society.
B.A., Boston Atheneum.
B.M., British Museum.
B.P.L., Boston Public Library.
C.H.S., Connecticut Historical Society.
E.I., Essex Institute.
H.C., Harvard College.
H.S.P., Historical Society of Pennsylvania.
J.C.B., John Carter Brown Library.
L.C., Library of Congress.
L.C.Phil., Library Company of Philadelphia.
M.H.S., Massachusetts Historical Society.
N.Y.H.S., New York Historical Society.
N.Y.P.L., New York Public Library.
N.Y.Soc.L., New York Society Library.
N.Y.S.L., New York State Library.
R.I.H.S., Rhode Island Historical Society.
R.I.M.S., Rhode Island Medical Society.
U.P., University of Pennsylvania.
W.L., Watkinson Library.
Ya., Yale Library.

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[1] An asterisk signifies that the book or the particular copy in question has not been seen by me.—[E. E. F. S.]

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